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THE
UNIVERSAL
Medicine :
A
SERMON.

Together with Four more,
VIZ.

*God Just, and Man Miserable.
The Reward of the Faithful.
Saul amongst the Prophets.*

AND

Jesus the Desired Object.

Preached on several Texts of Scripture :

By *Geo. Lefly*, Minister of the Gospel.

LONDON,

Printed for *Charles Smith*, at the Angel, near the
Inner Temple-Gate, *Fleetstreet*. 1678.



1881



To the Right Honourable
John Earl of *Exeter*, Ba-
ron of *Burleigh*, and one
of His Majesties Lord-
Lieutenants for the Coun-
ty of *Northampton*, &c.
Health here, and Happi-
ness hereafter.

Right Honourable,

T Hough I was never so happy as
to be known by your Lordship,
so much as by face; yet the
fame of your extraordinary
Candor, Worth and Honour, hath em-
boldned me to run into a vulgar Error.

A 2

For

The Epistle

For seeing almost every day Persons of mean condition (when blessed with Twins) aim at the greatest Godfathers, or such at least as may be able to defend them, from the injuries incident to their Infant-estate; I do humbly entreat, that your Lordship would be pleased to stand for one of mine, a poor deform'd Abortive of the Mind. My Lord, I durst not have attempted so Noble a Personage, had not your Honourable Brother, and my very good Lord the Earl of Westmoreland, daigned to perform the like Office for the other. His Lordship's seemeth to be the elder, because a Footman: However, if your Lordship despise not the day of small things, this other in a short time may be fit for greater employment. I have given it the Name of Universal Medicine, and hope, through Heaven's assistance, that it will answer it, the most of the Receipts being confirmed with a Probatum est, from the Spirit of Truth. Accept of it therefore, Noble Sir, and use it as an ordinary Cordial, when corporeal Physick hath not its due operation: I dare not say that it will make a perfect Cure, yet do most assuredly hope, that it may be a means to sweeten the bitter Pills
of

Dedicatory.

*of temporal afflictions, and augment the
Graces which will undoubtedly end in Glory.
Which shall ever be the Prayer for your
Lordship, of*

My Lord,

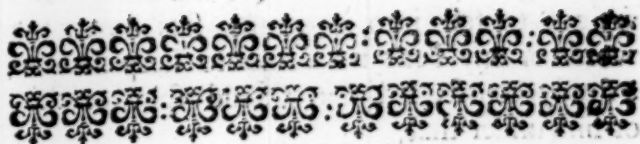
*Wittring,
July 28.
1677.*

Your Lordships

most obedient Servant,

Geo. Lesly.

The



The Universal Medicine.

The First Sermon.

James 5. 13.

*Is any among you afflicted ?
Let him pray.*



Though the Theatre of the World be great, and every Man an Actor, yet have they all but two Parts, viz. Prosperity and Adversity, which, if well managed, will gain an eternal Plaudit with glorious Bays ; otherwise a contemptible Stigma of the same duration. The serious thoughts of this made holy *Agur* beg neither poverty nor riches, but a *Prov. 30. 8.* mean, food convenient : And blessed *St. James,*

B

know-

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knowing that both in the one and other, Men are apt to fall into extreams, sets down the words of my Text for a Pilot to keep them in a steady course, lest they should split on this, or sink under that,

Medio tutissimus ibis.

The Author is St. *James* then, the Son of *Alpheus*, and *Mary* of *Cleophas*, and Brother of Christ. His scope and manner of writing in this whole Epistle is hortatory, and aiming (chiefly) at the correction of Manners; which (if you trace him with me) doth evidently appear; for immediately after his short Preface (which takes up only the first Verse) he begins the Exhortations.

First, Wilhing to have a right judgement of Temptations, whether inward or outward, from the 2d to the 19th of the first Chapter.

Secondly, To be ready to hear, receive, and do the Word, from the 19th Verse to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, To avoid respect of persons, for worldly differences of estate and condition, from the 1st of the 2d Chapter, to Verse 14.

Fourthly, To joyn Works to Faith, without which it is dead, from thence to the end.

Fifthly, To shun abuses of the Tongue, Chap. 3. from the 1st Verse to the 18th.

Sixthly, To reform their Lusts, by submitting to God and resisting the Devil, Chap. 4th to the 14th.

Se-

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Seventhly, To depend on God's Providence for their Lives and Actions, from the 14th Verse to the end of the Chapter.

Eighthly, To use Riches aright, Chap. 5. to Verse 12.

Ninthly, To avoid rash Swearing, Verse 12.

Lastly, and so to my Text, He (as it were his *ultimus conatus*) gathers all his Forces together, ingeminating his requests, for improvement of their own and others prayers and praises, as the prosperous or adverse Fortunes gave occasion.

Is any among you afflicted ? &c.

Thus have you seen the Apostle's Method. Now must we enquire into his Meaning, by explication of the words after this manner :

Κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν ; *Æger est aliquis inter vos ?* saith Beza. *Si quis ex vobis fuerit in afflictione,* as Junius, and others. * *Is any among you afflicted ?* saith our Translation. *Is any ? &c.* What a Question is here ? Doth St. James doubt, whether the converted *Jews* that were dispersed abroad, were afflicted yea or no ? No, he doth not ; but he questions, whether they had learned the right way either to bear, suffer, or to be freed from them. And therefore take the words by way of Inference, thus ; I know your profession gives you no exemption from the Cross ; but seeing it doth and must attend you, let your refuge be Prayer.

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Afflicted: The original Verb is *Κακοπαθεῖν*, and signifieth the bearing or enduring any injuries whatever; so that it may be said to be any trouble, grief, or evil, that happeneth to Soul, Body, Name or Estate, and that either for tryal or punishment. The Apostile's words then may run thus: Trouble, grief, and other injuries attend every good Man, which when they come to your share, Pray.

Let him pray, *Προσευχέσθω*: This cometh from *Προσεύχουμαι*, which signifieth as much as *Bonorum petitio*, the asking of good things, *precēs fundere*, *vota facere*, *accedere ad Deum*, atq; *ab illo optare*, *seu precari*, saith *Piscator*. From hence omitting other definitions, we say, That Prayer is a speech, whereby we ask of God good things, whether corporal, spiritual or eternal. Now if we joyn this with what is said before, you will not only find the sence good, but the Exhortation seasonable. Seeing ye are not freed from trouble, but have misery written on your foreheads; and seeing God hath things corporal, spiritual and eternal in his power, pray to him for deliverance. Having thus cleared our way, let us go on in our Journey, the following Propositions being our guide. And first,

That the estate of God's Church in this Life is subject to affliction.

Secondly, *That Prayer is the only means of its deliverance.*

For clearing of the first (beside my Text) if we view her both in spirituals and temporals, the truth is apparent. What greater affliction than to be killed, and killed by a Brother ? Thus *Gen. 4. 8.* was *Abel* ; to be scorned ? Thus was *Isaac* ; to *Gen. 21. 9.* be hated ? Thus was *Jacob* ; to be persecuted ? *Gen. 27. 4.* Thus was *David* ; to be despised ? Thus was *Psal. 3. 1.* *Mordecai* ; to be condemned to a fiery furnace ? *Esth. 3. 36.* Thus were the three Children ; to a Lion's den ? *Dan. 3. 21.* Thus was *Daniel* ; to be beheaded ? Thus was *Dan. 6. 16.* *John Baptist* ; to be betrayed, scourged and crucified ? Thus was the Churches Head, and the *Mat. 14. 10.* World's Saviour ; to be stoned, sawn asunder, *Mat. 27. 26.* tempted, slain with the sword, being destitute, afflicted, tormented ? Thus were they of whom *Heb. 11. 37.* the World was not worthy. But what need I date the Church from so early an *Epocha* ; may not the Blood of Martyrs these sixteen hundred years, the confusions in, and overturnings of, both Church and State, within these forty, witness this sad truth, That the Church and Children of God are not freed from temporal calamities ? We will now see whether their spiritual condition be more secure, or whether that admits of any change. O yes ! There is nothing but such, till Heaven immortalize her, and turn her to a blessed immutability. What an ever to be deplored change was that in *Adam* ? From innocency to corruption, from God to the Devil, and from Heaven to Hell. Must this be his rest for ever ? No, (all praise to the Almighty) he must change again, as before from the better to the worse, so now from that to the

better ; he by grace changeth to an estate of grace : And yet notwithstanding, Man in this condition, must have his fluxes and refluxes, interlunes, newes, fulls, and decreases, as may appear by this induction. *Abraham* the Father of the faithful, who believed in things contrary to nature, and obeyed in things contrary to humanity, witness the hopes and killing of his Son *Isaac* ; yet sticks at his going into *Egypt*, for fear of that life from which God had said, there should proceed a multitude like the Stars. *Jacob* though he had parted with a Joynt for a blessing, yet the sight of his Brother, or rather tidings of his coming, puts him out of Joynt. Beloved *Israel*, though he came out of *Egypt* fraught with spoil, yet one sight of pursuing *Pharaoh* made him unload both fraught and faith ; *Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us out to die in the wilderness.* *David* sometimes strong as a Rock, *I will not fear what man can do unto me* ; yet at other times so cast down, that he said in his heart, *I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul.* *Elijah* though he had been zealous for God, yet arose and went for his life. *Peter's* denial is enough, who out of fleshly courage could cut off *Malchai's* ear, yet before he receive a threat or a buffet, denieth his Master. And thus you see the Pillars are changeable. Now take the Churches own word ; *I sleep, but my heart waketh* : She that was but just now in her Saviour's solacious arms, giving and receiving mutual Eulogies worthy of her self, hath now folded her hands, laying her head on the

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the pillow of security ; *I sleep*. But hold : We need not go so far for Witnesses to attest this ; every one of us may look at home, where we shall find evidence enough. As for temporal troubles, who are free ? The King hath his, and the Beggar his. And as for spiritual, who can say he hath made his heart clean ? he is free from sin, and that's the cause of affliction. Who can say upon good grounds, that his Soul had never a retrograde motion ? that the fire of divine Love kept always an equal flame in his breast ? Surely none. But alas ! We can all say, if we will, Sometimes our Souls run to God like the Chariots of *Aminadab*, and anon they are sunk like *Nabal's*. Sometimes our Tongues are as the Pens of ready writers, and presently again falter in our mouths. When we have received the blessed Sacrament, have we not cryed out, *Lord, evermore give us this Bread, this Drink ?* And immediately, are not the Waters of *Assyria* and *Damascus*, as good as that of *Jordan* ? When we hear of the Joys of Heaven, say we not, *We had rather be door-keepers there, than dwell in the tents of Kedar ?* But even then cometh a change, *'Tis good for us to be here*. Do we not vow to become new Creatures ? which is no sooner done than undone. In fine, Unless I can see the old Man that had never a gray hair, nor aking head, panting heart, or empty Coffer ; that never found the way rough, nor the day cloudy, in his Christian course ; that never wanted the return of his prayers, nor feared desertion, nor yet the Urim and Thummim of assurance

Honos onus.

urance in his breast : Unless, I say, I can see the Man that can without tribulation enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, I must hold this Truth for granted, *That the state of God's Church in this life is subject to affliction* : Which comes to pass not contingently, but for good Reasons. As

First, That the Pity, Power, Providence and Truth of the Almighty may be made manifest, Jer.30.11. *in keeping of his Promises. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee ; though I make a full end of all Nations, whither I have scattered thee, yet I will not make a full end of thee, but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished : He will not always chide.*

Secondly, The Church is afflicted, because she should not forget her self, which she would soon do if there were a perfect immunity from the Cross ; which made the Prodigal a dutiful Son, and David a keeper of God's Law. While Souldiers keep a Garrison in peaceable times, they look more on the pleasant situation, than fortification of the Place : Though one hot Siege makes them look more to muniment than ornament, more to the strengthening of their inward Forts, than painting of their Frontispiece ; even so prosperity or adversity makes the Church secure or vigilant. This was verified in the Jewish Church ; *She knew not that I gave her corn, and wine, and oyl, and multiplied her silver and her gold, which they had prepared for Baal* : That is, While she swimm'd in all earthly delicacies, she had not the grace to consider, that
God

Hol.2.8.

God was the bestower, and that she had from him that very silver and gold which she bestowed upon her Idols. See what followeth, which is to this effect; *Because she doth not acknowledge this, I will call in my former favours, and withdraw my hand from giving more, that she may learn by adversity, to prize what she slighted in prosperity, and I will call her to an account for her Idolatrous festivities. I will remember the days of Baalim, therefore I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, &c.* That is, I will solicit her first with wholesome counsel, then bring her into captivity, or affliction, and even in the midst of this, speak comfortably to, and sustain her; and when upon her repentance I have restored her to her former habitation, with all its appurtenances, she shall sing as before, and shall call me *Isbi* my Husband, and not as before, *Baali* my Lord. When *Ephraim* hath seen both states, their own emptiness, and God's goodness, they then cry out, *What have we to do any more with Idols?* Verf. 9. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Thirdly, God afflicts his Church to cure her ignorance. Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your covenant with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be troden down by it; from the time that it goeth forth, it shall take you, for morning by morning it shall pass over, by day and by night, and it shall be a vexation. But hear to what end; only to understand the report, that is, to make them believe the truth of God's Word. Doth not the Isa. 28. 18.

Scrip-

Scripture tell, That Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge? The Drunkard, the Swearer, the Thief, the Liar, and all other prophane persons, shall not be held guiltless; yet 'tis all but beating the air, for who is afraid of any such thing? But when God doth send remarkable judgments upon obstinate sinners, they lay them to heart. When *Corah, Dathan and Abiram*, were swallowed up for their rebellion, 'tis said, *The people feared.*

1 Pet. 1. 7, 7

Fourthly, God afflicts his Church for the tryal of her faith. *Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: Why? That the tryal of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tryed with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.* To believe in God in *Eden*, is not so much as in *Aceldama*. Double gilt Silver may pass for Gold from the eye, but the hammer or water of separation will discover what it is: So Faith may pass for currant, while Heaven smileth, that is not so; but if it once put on blacks, it vanisheth in diffidence; it may look at Mount *Moriab*, but never build an Altar, nor offer an *Isaac*.

But Fourthly, To be brief, God afflicteth his Church to make her humble, patient and holy. All which ought to put us in mind, that we are neither to despise, nor despair at affliction. We must not despise them, but on the contrary, *Micah 6. 9.* hearken both to them, and him who hath appointed them; for every rod hath a tongue. Is it Sword? Harken to it. Doth it not

not warn to repentance? Else at last men are counted enemies, and slain for ever. Is it Pestilence? Doth it not teach us to beware of the plague of a hard heart, and reprobate sense? Is it Famine? Doth it not wish us to take heed of that that is neither of bread, nor thirst of water, but of hearing the Word of the Lord? Is it Fire? Cryeth it not, beware of eternal flames? Or if the affliction be spiritual, and God leave us to our selves, withdrawing the Joys of his Salvation from us, let us beware of eternal separation, that fearful sentence, *Depart from me, I know you not.* And as we must hearken to them, so to him that appointed them. This was David's way, and it must be ours: *Let him curse,* 2 Sam. 16, saith he, *for the Lord hath bidden him speak:* So II. let us say, *Lord, we acknowledge thy Judgments to be just, for we have deserved them, and many more.*

But again, As we are not to despise the rod, so we are not to despair when we lye under it. Because

First, They are Short; and that in a fourfold respect:

First, In respect of the term of our life; and what is that? Even a vapour: Why should we then despair for that we are not sure will last a day, an hour, or a minute.

Secondly, They are short, if we consider how soon God can deliver, and hath delivered such as have been afflicted. The Woman that had the Issue of Blood twelve years, was cured in an instant by touching Christ's garment; and the

Mat. 9. 20.

Joh. 5. 8. the Man that had been lame eight and thirty, had as speedy a release.

Thirdly, They are short, if we consider the punishment of the wicked, which will be for ever: *Isa. 66.* and the last Verse; *And they shall go forth, and look upon the Carcasses of the men that have rebelled against me, for their worm dieth not, neither shall their fire be quenched, &c.*

Fourthly, They are short, in respect of Heavens Joy. *In a little wrath I bid my face from thee in a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.* Despair not then, they are short.

Secondly, As they are short, so they are inevitable. Whatsoever God hath said, must come to pass: But he hath said, *Through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven;* therefore it must be so. Must we then be afraid of that we cannot shun? seeing he that would live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecuti-

2Tim. 3. 11 ons.

Thirdly, We are not to despair, because we are but Partners with Christ. Hear his own words; *If the World hate you, ye know it hated me before it hated you.* And the Apostle Peter; *Beloved, Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall appear, ye may be glad with exceeding joy.*

Joh. 15. 18.
1 Pet. 4. 12,
13.

Fourthly, There is no reason to despair, because the afflictions of the godly are testimonies of their Father's Love, and their own Sonship:

For

The Univerſal

For whom the Lord loveth he
reſerveth every ſon whom he receiveth

But how ſhall we know
we ſuffer be fatherly correction
greater Judgements?

This you may know,
distinguishing marks. As

First, Affliction proceeding
beginneſh betimes: 2 Tim. 4. 17. Judgement be-
ginneſh at the Houſe of God, &c. whileas thoſe that
muſt receive the ſeverer laſh, are ſuffered to
reign in their impiety, till the cup of their wicked-
neſs be full.

Secondly, It is gentle: Pſal. 118 18. The
Lord hath chaſtned me, but he hath not given me
over unto death. But the other are moſt ſevere:
Pſal. 75. 8. In the hand of the Lord there is a Cup,
and the Wine is red, it is full of mixture, and he
poureth out of the ſame, but the dregs thereof all
the wicked of the earth ſhall wring them out, and
drink them.

Thirdly, It hath a ſpeedy and happy end:
Iſa. 54. 7. For a ſmall moment have I forſaken
thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee;
while that of the wicked hath the addition of
eternity: Pſal. 92. 8. When the wicked ſpring as
the graſs, and when all the workers of iniquity do
flouriſh, it is that they may be deſtroyed for ever.

Fourthly, The Children of God bear their
afflictions patiently: The Lord gave; and the
Lord hath taken away, ſaith Job: And though
he kill me, yet will I truſt in him. But the wick-
ed murmur and repine at theirs, 2 Cor. 10. 10.

Oh

sal Medicine.

! I am afraid I shall sink
take these Directions.
together at your selves,
and weight of the Cross
when in your own ap-
well, have recourse to God,
how ready he is to help
Take David for your president ;
Psal. 56. 3, 4 *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*

Secondly, Call to mind his Promises for assistance and deliverance : For assistance see that matchless one, *Isa. 53. 1. But thus saith the Lord, that created thee O Jacob, and he that formed thee O Israel, Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, for I have called thee by my Name, and thou art mine; when thou passest through the waters, &c.* Which words, if they be taken in a literal sense, were they not fulfilled at the Red Sea and Jordan, to the Children of Israel, and to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who were in the fiery furnace, and yet had not their cloaths singed ? And if you take them in a spiritual sense, hear what the great Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 10. 13. There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man ; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

Thirdly, Look on and remember Examples of former Ages. Never any were overthrown, that sought to him for deliverance. For this read *Heb. 11.* and it will inform you.

Now you say something, may you possibly say. Object. Those that would have assistance under, and deliverance from affliction, must seek, but how?

My Text answereth, *Is any afflicted? let him Answer. pray.* From whence we gather,

That the chief Medicine for afflictions of all sorts is Prayer. This hath annexed to it a *Probatum est* from Heaven, being prescribed by the great Physician of Souls only, not here in my Text alone, but also *Psal. 50. 13. Call upon me in the day of trouble, &c.* And it hath taken so well, and proved so effectual, that all the Saints in sacred Scriptures have made use of it. This *Isaac* took for his Wife her barrenness: *And Gen. 25. 21. Isaac entreated the Lord for his Wife, because she was barren, and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebecca his Wife conceived.* This was *Jacob's* weapon, when he expected nothing less than a revengeful meeting with his Brother *Esan*: There 'tis said, *He prayed to the Lord, to deliver him from the hand of Esau his Brother.* Thus did *Moses* at the Red Sea: *And when Israel Exo 14. 15 conquered Amaleck, This was Sampson's shift Exod. 17. for Drink, after that miraculous Battle with the Philistines, Judg. 15. 18, 19. And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant, and now I die for thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised: But. God clave the hollow place of the Jaw, and there came water out of it.* Was not this duty *David's* constant practice? As few of the Saints had more crosses, so none oftner at the Throne of Grace than him-

Mat. 26. 39.

himself. This the three Children experienced in the fiery Furnace; *Daniel* in the Lion's Den; *Jonah* in the Whale's Belly; and *Jesus* himself, whose infirmities were sinless, used this Antidote against his anguish: *And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, Father, If it be possible, let this Cup pass from me, &c.* All which clear the Truth formerly asserted, *That Prayer is the chief Medicine in affliction.*

Obj. 1.

But here some may object, and say, I am afflicted, 'tis true, and God knoweth my wants and necessities well enough: Then what need I pray?

Ans.

To this unseasonable Objection, take this Answer: *Oratores non Narratores sumus.* We pray not to acquaint God, as being ignorant of what we want, but to facilitate his mercies, and testify our obedience to him, who requires it as a duty, seeing it hath pleased him in his unsearchable Wisdom, to appoint Prayer as a mean, for obtaining all blessings necessary at his hands. And surely he would be counted foolish indeed, that would say, *Such a man knoweth what I stand in need of, and therefore I hope he will give it me without asking.*

Obj. 2.

O but I know he hath determined how it shall be, and therefore let me pray never so much, it is impossible for me either to open or stop the current of his mercies.

Ans.

To this I only say, That as God hath ordained the end, so the means conducing to that end, and the chief in affliction is Prayer.

But I have prayed often, and am never the Object. 3.
nearer.

It may be so, and yet the truth of what I *Ans.*
have said is no whit damaged. For now I

First, It may be you have prayed amiss.
Was the aim and end of your request to pro-
mote God's Glory, and your Soul's eternal in-
terest? I doubt not. Was it not rather to show-
rish your own lusts? Would you sue for a Li-
cence to break the King's Laws, and have it
granted? Balaam built Altars, and the Whore
paid her Vows, the first to move God to curse
his own people, and the second for prosperity
to her naughty courses, neither of which could
ever expect to be heard. It may be ye have
begg'd a strong Body, and a plentiful Estate,
that ye might go with the Prodigal, and spend
your days in riotous living, as was our Apostle
saith, *To consume in your lusts*. No marvel then
you receive it not.

Or Secondly, It may be ye were not fitted
for those mercies you askt, the ground of your
heart was not enough plow'd for that seed;
you know there is way-fidelity, and thorny, *Mat. 13.*
as well as good ground.

Or Thirdly, 'Tis like he would have you
pray more earnestly: For that which we sue
longest for, we prize most when we have it.
The Spouse's Love is never dearer, than when
she hath sought him, not only on her Bed, but
in the Streets, and endured beating and wound-
ing for him; then she holds him, and will not
let him go, until he is brought into her Mo-

C H A P T E R X I I I. *ther's*

ther's House, into the Chambers of her that conceived her.

Or Fourthly, To prevent spiritual security. If we should have all granted, we should soon say with *Peter*, *It is good for us to be here*; or *Soul take thy ease*. *St. Paul* himself must pray thrice before the buffetings of *Satan* be removed.

Object. 4. But once more you may say, *We are commanded to be patient under affliction*; why should we pray for the removal of it?

Answer. Prayer and Patience suit well together; for *Christ* and *David*, two of the patientest that ever lived, both prayed. We will now apply what hath been said, thus:

Is Prayer the only Medicine? Then let such as take other ways, and search out other Receipts, mind well what they do. *Abaziah* may send to the God of *Ekron*, and *Saul* may go to the Witch at *Endor*, *Ephraim* and *Judah* may implore the *Assyrian*, and send to King *Jareb* for help, but they shall find none; 'tis only in God that the Fatherless find mercy.

2 King. 1. 2.

Secondly, From what is said, we may take occasion to reprove those that are fullen and smitten at affliction, that will not pray at all, but revounce and mock at Piety and Religion. Such shall assuredly know, that God will break those that will not bow; take *Julian* the Apostate for an example.

Thirdly, If Prayer be the only remedy; Then let me persuade such as feel his afflicting hand upon them, to make their first addresses to him, after this manner:

First,

First, With a sense of their wants, acknowledging themselves to be undone, without hope, without help, without comfort, while they are without him, crying out with the storm-beaten Disciples, *Master save us, else we perish.*

Secondly, With fervency, as he that begs for his life; thirsting with *David*, crying with *Moses*, wrestling with *Jacob*, and fighting with *St. Paul* for Soul-satisfying Grace.

Thirdly, Faithfully; that is, believing we shall receive what we implore at his hands. We must not go as *Queen Esther* to *Ahasuerus*, but as the Woman diseased to the Soul-Physician. This our Apostle exhorts us to, *Chap. 15, 6, 7.* *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him; but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind, and tossed; for let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

Fourthly, Constantly, imitating the importunate Widow, and hearkning to *St. Paul's* Exhortation, wishing *such to pray continually, and to continue in prayer*, holy violence being very acceptable to God; his Kingdom suffers it, and the violent take it by force. To sum up all: Would you have your prayers heard in time of affliction? Let your aim and end be the Glory of God. If ye pray for health, say with good *Hezekiah*, *What shall be the sign that I shall go up into the House of the Lord?* And in the mean time use all good means; for 'tis to no purpose to pray,

and not endeavour by practice. We would think him a foolish Navigator, that would pray for a good Voyage and happy arrival at the *East Indies*, and direct his course toward the *West*: So it is as great madness in the Drunkard, the Swearer, the Lyar, the Sabbath-breaker, &c. to pray to be delivered from their respective sinful courses, and yet never strive to leave them; for they do but take God's Name in vain, mock Religion, and crucifie the Son of God afresh. While as he that prayeth and practiseth, sueth for help, and endeavoureth to practise, shall, though he have lain among the Pots, come out like the wings of a Dove covered with silver, whose feathers are of yellow gold; or thus, in our Apostle's words, *Blessed is he that endureth temptation, for when he is tryed, he shall receive the Crown of Life*; for which let us ever pray.

God



God Just,

AND

Man Miserable.

The Second Sermon.

II. CHRON. xv. 2.

*But if ye forsake Him, he will
forsake You.*

THe greatest Truths are always most
call'd into Question (such is the
perverseness of humane nature.) That
there is a God, hath been in some
measure acknowledged by all the

Sons of Adam, *Nulla gens tam barbara, &c.* And
yet David's Fool saith in his heart, *There is none,*
C 3 and

Deut. 29.
19.

and the Egyptian King's question is no less wide, *Who is the Lord that I should obey him?* His Omnipotence which the Creation and Government of the World sufficiently evidenceth, hath been, and will be oppugned by some, *who shall give us flesh to eat?* say the mixt multitude, *Numb. 11. 4.* Or hear them more plainly, *Psal. 78. 19. Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?* As for his Justice, which of us is free? who some time or other say not, *Though we add drunkenness to thirst, and walk in the imagination of our own hearts, yet we shall have peace;* but see what immediately followeth, *The Lord will not spare him.* To which as a second, I joyn my Text, *If ye forsake him, he will forsake you;* which is a part of *Azariah's* Prophecy unto *Asa*, who as you see in the former Chapter, succeeded *Abijah*, and though he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord; yet lest he should at last boast and say, *With mine own hand have I gotten these Victories,* the Lord sent his Prophet to tell him, that it was not he, but God that was with him and fought for him, so long as he was with him, and served him, but if it should happen that he should be weary and leave off to pay his allegiance, God would withdraw his soveraign protection: *If ye forsake him, &c.* The words then offer you a third Argument made use of by the Prophet to continue *Asa* in the service of his Maker, as he had begun, and that taken *ab incommodo*, from the disadvantage that should accrue to him if he did otherwise. The bare rehearsal of which Text shall serve both for Explication and Doctrine, thus;

They

They that forsake God, God will forsake them.

In this there are two things considerable.

First, That men may forsake God.

Secondly, God will forsake those that forsake him.

These two we will speake to distinctly; the first we will clear by shewing first, *Quod*, or the truth of the thing, that man forsaketh God.

2. *Quare*, Why he forsaketh him.
3. *Quomodo*, How he forsakes him.
4. *Quando*, When he forsakes him.
5. The Application.

1. That man forsaketh God, is a truth unquestionable: though alas! we are all ready to say with the Disciples, Who forsaketh God? Is it I? Or rather, is it not I. But my answer must be general, 'Tis you and I, and all Mankind, we have all forsaken God; he hath said it, and I must say it, *Let God be true, and every man a liar.* Look back on those dismal Expressions, (dismal, I say, for what followed.) *Hast thou eaten? what is this that thou hast done?* Gen. 3. 11. 13. was there not something amiss here do you think? did the maker of all things chide in vain? No surely, there was a breach of his most just Commandments actual in them, but original to us, he forsook him in his own person, we in his loyns, that this contagion hath overspread all, see the following Texts, *Ye have forsaken me, and served other Gods. Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me.* Judg. 10. 13. 2 Chron. 12. 5. But my people have

Jer. 2. 13.

committed two great evils, they have forsaken me, &c. How shall I pardon this? Thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no Gods.

Jer. 5. 7.

Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward, &c. And now I come to the Quare, or rather, let God come and expostulate with you and me, saying, *Why have ye forsaken me?* This must renew our grief if our hearts were not obdurate: when we look on the Scripture before cited; *What is this*, &c. As if he had said, What hast thou done? or rather, why hast thou done this? Was not thy Husband made the noblest of Creatures (Angels excepted) wast not thou made his equal, he Lord, and thou Lady? was there any thing wanting that might conduce to your happiness? what have you done to fall so foully in so short a time? Nay, and if our memories be so false as not to remember; or if we do, but think it belongeth not to us, hearken to the Son of God asking us the same question, *What have you done?* Did I not command my Apostles to leave my Covenanted people, and turn to you? Doth not my blood cry Mercy, peace, and reconciliation to you? What have you for all these things forsaken me? you, whom I formed in the womb; you, whom I brought into the world; you, whom I have kept in, and from the world, have you forsaken me? What can our answers be? surely nothing but this, (if we have not renounced Reason and Religion) we are all guilty, guilty of disobedience, guilty of ingratitude: we who are indebted for all these favours, have forsaken thee.

But

But though *Adam* be dead, his excuses are not :
Thy ways are not equal. Hear now O house of
Israel, are not my ways equal ? Read Ezek. 18.
 and your mouth will be stopped. He doth not
 love us: a poor excuse; what more ardent?
 what more passionate than *Jer. 31. 20. Is E-*
phraim my dear son ? is he a pleasant child ? For
since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember
him still therefore my bowels are troubled for him:
I will surely have mercy on him saith the Lord.
Hosea 11. 8. How shall I give thee up Ephraim ?
 &c. What greater expressions of love than these?
 why then have we forsaken him ? Let us there-
 fore awake our drowsie Souls to this full and
 free confession, that we are ready to flee from
 him that seeks our eternal salvation, and to obey
 him who plotteth our ruine.

I comenow to the third, which is *Quomodo*,
 how we forsake God.

Can we number the Stars of Heaven ? Can
 we bring the vast Ocean within the compass of
 a Nutshel ? or darken the Beams of the Morning
 Sun ? Can we count the hairs of our heads, or
 the exigencies through the whole course of our
 life ? If these things be possible, then may we ex-
 press the manner and ways, how we have for-
 saken him; yet we may conjecture so far as to
 afford us matter of self-condemnation, by look-
 ing back upon the first sinner, and comparing
 our backslidings with his : As

First, He had harsh thoughts of God and his
 Promises, when he favoured that doubtful
 expression, *Lest ye die.* Now this early distrust
 hath

hath taken such root, that we his offspring have no sooner the use of our reason, than we begin to reason with our selves; can it be so and so? can God number our dayes, separate our souls and bodies by death, or raise those bodies reduced to their first dust? can he refine flesh and blood so as to make it fit for the kingdom of heaven and everlasting life? and thus by harsh thoughts we begin to waver.

Secondly, He despised his commands, having a strict Injunction laid upon him not to eat the forbidden fruit; and yet he did it; so we, not to touch the Apples of *Sodom*, to loath sin, and our selves because of it, but alas! his and our obedience cometh to one pass; he transgressed, and so do we.

Thirdly, He was intemperate, all the Trees of the Garden gave not satisfaction. without that of knowledge of good and evill. And how well *Amon*, *Abab* and all of us imitate him in this God onely knoweth; *Amon's* life is tedious to him unless he can lie with his sister *Tamar*: *Abab* will ly fullen on his bed for *Naboth's* vineyard: *Samson* must have his *Dalilah*, and so must every one of us our beloved sinnes, though hell and damnation follow.

4ly, He was inordinate in his love, preferring his rib to his Maker, *Eve's* smiles and sugared words must weigh down the frownes and punishments of heaven, and we his offspring are still of
the

the same mind, prizing the creature above the Creator, all which he that searcheth his own heart, (but superficially) will find to be true; so that we may upon good grounds say in thoughts, words and actions, we forsake God: and that bringeth me to the fourth, which is

Quando. When do we forsake God? when do we not forsake him? Behold saith *David*, *I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me:* and (I hope) when we know our right hands from our left, there is none of us so shameless, unless he be gone astray from God and his Mother the Church, that will say, he forsaketh not God. If *David* teach a young man to cleanse his way, and *Solomon* bids him remember his creator, and if *St. Paul* call himself a miserable man, where shall we find any in our time free from sins contagion? seeing there is no man living that sinneth not. Let us now apply what is said; Thus,

If it be not only possible but probable and too true, that we forsake God, may not this be matter of grief to us all, that we have such a Master, such a Father, such a Conserver, such a Lord, such a Law-giver such a Benefactor, and yet forsake him? Let us therefore draw from our hearts *Jeremiah's* wish, that our heads were wells of water, and our eyes were fountains of tears, that we might weep day and night for our forsaking of God. let us repent and turn unto him, knowing that he is gracious, merciful and ready to forgive, having a mantle of love to cover our sins, and a screen
of

mercy to stand between us and the devouring fire of his Justice. While as the impenitent sinner, that hateth to be reformed, shall feel the truth of my text verified on him, *God will forsake him*, and this brings me to the second branch of my Doctrine, viz. *That God will forsake sinners.*

Obj. ſt.

Anſw.

I know ſome will be ready to ſay, this is very harſh we are all ſinners, muſt we be all forſaken? If we look on our ſins as ſoul-condemning, and not alſo on the Mediator, who came into the world to ſave ſinners from condemnation, we muſt conclude ſo; there is a throne of Juſtice, there we may be all forſaken; but at the Mercy ſeat, we muſt make a diſtinction (becauſe God hath made it) between penitent and impenitent ſinners, and alſo betwixt their deſertions. And this ſubdivideth the branch for clearing of which, I ſhall ſhew:

1. How God leaveth penitents.
2. Why he leaveth them.
3. How long he leaveth them.

To which I ſhall add a word or two of Application and when that is done, take the ſame method as in the other.

Fiſt then ſeeing it is a truth apparent to all (and I hope all Chriſtians, *nomine tenus* believe it) that all are worthy to be deſerted: know that God forſaketh his owne children ſeveral wayes;

Fiſt, by withdrawing the gift of outward protection, and grace of inward comfort: for out-

outward protection, How was *Job* left? Did not the *Sabeans* and *Caldeans* carry away his Stock? And did not a mighty Wind throw down his eldest Son's House, which smothered all the rest of his Children, so that in one hour he is robb'd of both his Sons and Substance? For inward comfort, *David* and *Jonah* are my Witnesses; the first wanting freedom of spirit, the Joys of God's Salvation formerly possessed; the other past (as to his own thoughts) any hopes of recovery, being in the Whale's Belly. Besides who can deny, That the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, was dear to his Father? And yet we see him left to the unparalleled malice of a rude rabble, to be spit on, scourged, crown'd with thorns, beaten, crucified, and not only so, but also deprived of inward comfort. Was he not divested of it, when to man's apprehension he had most need of it? In the end of his Lent, saith the Reverend Bishop *Hall*, Angels came and ministred to him, but on the Cross none durst look out of a window of Heaven to comfort him.

Secondly, God is said to leave his own Servants for a time, when he taketh away the knowledge, feeling and fruits of his wonted Grace, of courage and holy magnanimity. This was *Peter's* case, when for saving of a sinful life, or rather fear of a shameful death, he denied the Lord of Glory.

Thirdly, God is said to leave his People, when he taketh away the Word, the Bread of Life from them. This *Jeremiah* complaineth of,

Lam.

Lam. 2. 7. God hath forsaken his Altars. And this is threatned, *Rev. 2. 5.* when he saith to the Church of *Ephesus*, He will remove their Candlestick out of its place, unless they repent. And thus God leaveth his own.

But why? First, To try their graces; to see if *David* will pray, pray, pray: *Peter* weep, weep, weep: *Paul* continue in his desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, *Jeb* go on in his integrity, and *Jonah* call unto God out of the Whale's Belly. 'Tis pleasure to walk in the fields in a Summers day, but the tryal of a man's hardiness is to abide the frost in Winter.

Secondly, That we may have pity on, and sympathy with, those that are deserted: *Gal. 6. 1. Brethren, If any man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted.* Experience is a good Physitian.

Fourthly, To wean our hearts from the World. *I have put off my Coat*, saith the Spouse, *how shall I put it on?* Though she is not long in this tone, she must and will rise, her bowels yearn, her newly washed feet must tread the dirty streets, nothing giving her satisfaction, till she gets a sight of him she lately flighted.

Fifthly, He forsakes his People, to let them see the bitter fruits of sin; and good reason he should, seeing he hath drank the bitterest part of the Cup, who never deserved to taste it.

Sixthly, To endear his presence the more, when it is regained. The Prodigal never knew what it was to be in his Father's house, till he began

began to be in want. *Ephraim* never knew whence her Corn, Wine and Oyl, Silver and Gold came, till God withdrew it. Neither do Christians mind the Author of their Blessings, till they are set on their own bottom. And now I come to the third thing, viz. *How long God leaveth his People.* As

First, He leaveth them till they be humbled. *Peter's* proud stomach must come down, his daring and lofty eyes must weep for his former folly. *David* must smart under this loss, till he repenteth the death and defilement of *Uriah* and *Bathsheba*.

Secondly, He leaveth his People, till they exalt him above all other things. The Church who before would not stir over her Beds-side, to open the door, would now give a thousand Worlds, if she had them, for one glimpse of his blessed Face, or one of his endearing expressions, or embraces, he must now be no more contemptible, but the chief of ten thousand.

Application.

May the best be forsaken? Then let such as are good prepare for a storm, get armour of proof against this encounter, the oyl of faith in their lamps, to light them in this cloudy night, always minding his promise who saith, that their forsaking shall be but for a small moment. He wrestled with *Jacob* but one night till he gave him the Blessing, tryed *Abraham* but once before he made him Father of the faithful, nor kept he the Woman of *Samaria* long in suspense, but instantly told her, He was the *Messiah*. He is that

that true *Joseph*, who when his Brethren come to him with empty Sacks, filleth them with what they desire, adding a silver Cup for further obligation. Let none take it ill then that God leaveth them on these accounts, for there will come a day, when they shall think all their sighs, tears and prayers well bestowed : One day in Heaven shall countervail all their desertions, if they were to live *Methuselah's* years. This for the first Part of the Doctrine.

The second is, *That God will forsake them who forsake him.*

Stand astonished O Heavens, and tremble O Earth, at the hearing of this most just but dreadful sentence, *He will forsake you !* If Judgement begin at the House of God, what shall the end of them be, that obey not his Gospel ? Surely this, *He will forsake them.* For enlarging of this Answer, I raise these two Quæries :

1. *How doth God forsake the wicked ?*
2. *When doth he forsake them ?*

To which, as before, I shall subjoyn the Application.

To the first, God forsaketh none of his Creatures so, as to withdraw his Essence or Power from them, seeing the Psalmist hath said, *Whither shall I go from thy presence, or whither shall I flee from thy Spirit ?* And Christ himself, *That he maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.* He gave *Saul* a Kingdom, and *Judas* an Apostleship, honour-

honoured *Haman*, and yet all forsaken. *The wicked flourish as a green Bay-tree*, for whom there is fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest prepared; but he forsaketh them, by withdrawing his graces restraining and assisting, so that they run headlong to their own destruction. And this is that denounced against the *Jews*, *Isa. 6. 10.* *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes; and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed:* That is, Their hearts shall be hardened, and made obstinate, and their ears dulled and deafened, that in my just Judgement they may be given up to a spiritual insensibleness, as a due punishment of their careless neglect of my Ordinances, and that thereupon may follow their just condemnation, that giving up to uncleanness, *Rom. 1. 24.* to strong delusions, *2 Thes. 2. 11.* And thus he forsaketh them. Now to the other: *When?*

'Tis in their

{ Life,
Death,
and
after Death.

In their Life he
forsaketh them,

{ 1. In his Word.
2. In his Sacraments.
3. In their Prayers.

D

In

In the Word, which is the favour of life unto life, sweeter than the honey and honey-comb, the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth, bringeth the true knowledge of God leadeth Pilgrims in the way to Heaven, converteth the stubborn and disobedient, is the Parent of Faith, and in fine, the Store-house and Magazine of Heaven, for all things necessary to a Christian's Life and Death. Yet all these to an unregenerate man have no relish; he is like Solomon's Horse-leech, crying, Give, give: But what? The light of God's countenance? No. His favour which is better than life? No. Remission of sins? No. Faith? No. Repentance? No. Heaven and Happiness eternal? No. What then? Riches, honour and pleasure, like *Judas*, preferring thirty pieces of Silver before his Salvation, and *Esaú's* Portage before a Birth-right. All their tone is, Who will shew us any good?

But some of these may say, I find sweetness in the World, then surely I cannot be forsaken.

But wherein do you find it? Whether in plowing or threshing? Do you perceive it sending the bitter scent of sin from your hearts, or bringing good store of money into your purses? I have heard of one that thinketh there is no Religion, but what he hath when he is in his but his Conclave ecchoeth, *Quantum profuit nobis hæc Fabula Christi?* How much hath this Fable (I suppose he meaneth the holy Scripture) of Christ profited us? And would

would to God that all of us were free of that of the *Jews*, *Away with Christ, and give us Barabbas*; away with Heaven, give us the fulness of the Earth: For this is the language of every wicked man's heart.

Secondly, God leaveth the wicked in the Sacraments of the Body and Blood of the Lord, which is our assurance of his return, the Bread and Water of Life, for the nourishment of Souls; for how little do they regard it? They may be fitly compared to the *Israelites*, that loathed Manna, and long'd for Onions and Garlick, and would have exchanged Quails for *Egypt's* Flesh-pots. They see nothing in it but bare Elements, they discern not the Lord's Body, and rather than spend an hour to prepare for it, they will utterly abstain from it.

And Thirdly, As for Prayer, which ought to be their Letters missive to Heaven, they will not trouble themselves with that lest the World should count them superstitious; and if they go about it, it is to little purpose; because if they say, *Our Father*, then they and their Master the Devil must not be friends. *Thy Kingdom come*, they dare not say, for then they desire the happiness they neither wish in good earnest to themselves nor others; and thus they neither read, hear, pray, nor receive aright, the god of this World having hardned their hearts, and shut their eyes and ears. But though this be enough, it is not all: They are forsaken also in their Deaths; and this appears by their

dislike of it, they would (if they had their desire) never die. Let *Paul* cry, while his Lungs ake, *Cupio dissolvi* ; let *Job* watch, *Hezekiah* set his house in order, *David* number his days, and *Solomon* cry. *All things are vanity*, &c. yea let the Christian's Champion, and Captain of their salvation, lay down his life to sweeten death, yet saith the wicked man, There is a Lion in the way, I cannot, I dare not die. And the reason is plain Because he wants those three divine Torchcs of Faith, Hope and Love, that should light him through the dark vail, and shadow of it. Faith he wants, or if he hath any, it is in his Estate, Wife and Children. Hope he wants, because the Resurrection and Heaven are sealed Books to him. Love he wants to all things except those for his temporal life. And thus being a poor, naked, blind wretch, must, whether he will or not, be hurried to the grave, an Emblem of his ensuing prison. And this bringeth me to the third, *His being forsaken after Death.*

While there is life, we say, there is hope of a Sinner's return to God, and the return of his blessed presence in love to him. But now, now, there is no Favourite : Let *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job* plead, they must not be heard ; no bribe, no bail can have any more place, to Gaol he must, bidding an everlasting adieu to him, whom he would never (in life) salute with bowed knee or broken heart ; which separation of all other is most deplorable for these Reasons :

First,

First, He is utterly deprived of the beatifick Vision, the sight of God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. If *Absolom* thought his life a burden, while he was banished from his Father's presence, how much more tedious and insupportably miserable will his life be, who is deprived of the sight of him, in whose presence is joy, and pleasure for evermore? To leave a dear Friend, and go into a far Countrey, makes the loving Relation grieve at it, and grudge his intended Journey, though it be to his honour and profit; to leave a Father Mother, or Children more; a loving and vertuous Wife most of all, though they have hopes to meet again to their advantage. But O how much more reason have they to grieve, who must for ever part with him who is more than Father, Mother, Friend, Wife or Children, to the greatest disadvantage, such exquisite torments, and soul-tormenting punishments, as cannot be imagined by any but him who feelth them.

Secondly, In respect of the Place whither they are banished. It is not into some Wilderness, to live among wilde Beasts, nor into *Turkie*, to rowe at the Gallies, from either of which redemption might be expected; but 'tis into Hell, *Tophet*, the bottomless pit, everlasting fire, out of which there is no redemption.

Facilis descensus averni, &c.

D 3

Thirdly,

Thirdly, In respect of the irrevocableness of the Sentence : It is *Jehovah's*, who changeth not ; the Laws of *Medes* and *Persians* could not be altered, how much less his, who is the Judge of all the World ? They must be punished not for a day, a month, a year, an age, and so expect release, but from age to age, to all eternity, without intermission of torture, or diminution of parts.

Fourthly, In respect of the punishment. 'Tis not whipping, burning of the hand or fore-head, cutting off a Member, or dissecting of the Body ; all which though they be bitter, yet they may be born ; but 'tis weeping, wailing, gnashing of teeth, lying, frying in fire and brimstone, kept in flame by the wrath of God for ever and ever. If a man could not lye on a Bed of Down or Roses, without turning for one year, though he fared deliciously every day without pain, how much more intollerable will it be to lye in fire and brimstone millions of millions of years ?

Fifthly, In respect of the Tormentors. The Devil will not be enough, though he be too much to make the state miserable, but there is a Sword, a Vulture, a Worm, that cuts, devours and consumeth the Soul, yet without diminution, the Conscience, whose acts as well direct as reflex, will breed eternal horror. Those when they behold *David*, as Master of the Quire

Quire in the heavenly *Jerusalem*, *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job*, with millions more, sitting about the Throne, with their Harps tuned to an eternal height, in the praise of a slain Saviour. These, when they consider their own frowardness, having had the same God to deal withal as they, the same Word, the same Promises, their same means, the same mercies, for attaining the wish'd for end, and yet slighted all this, shall be the cause of their vain wishes, of being covered by Hills and Mountains, and a total (if possible) annihilation. Consider these things ye that forsake him, lest he forsake you, and tear you in pieces, while there is none to deliver.

Application.

And now, wicked man, this is thy doom, think of it what thou wilt, 'tis as sure as God is in Heaven, and thou on Earth. And yet will not the hearing of all this break thy hard heart, and thaw thy frozen eyes? Will not the thoughts of eternal burning bate thy unnatural flames? Doth the pleasure of sin that is but for a season, make thee run upon thy eternal ruine? Give over, ere it be too late. I tell thee, and command thee to hear and believe me, as thou wilt answer the contrary at the great and dreadful Day of Judgement, when all the World shall be in a flame of fire about thy ears, and thou canst find no hiding place; thou wouldest give

Cresus's Riches, Absalom's Beauty, Achitophel's Craft, the rich Glutton's Treasure, the Prodigal's Pleasure, nay ten thousand Worlds, if thou hadst them, for one such advice, when it will not be given. To day then, while it is called to day, harden not your hearts: And if ye will not hear me, hear an Ancient; *Quis agis miser, perire vis? Facillimo istud impendū fiet, horulā unā, imò unicā parte horulæ, per iram vel libidinem patras quod æternum doleas.* That is, Miserable man that thou art, what dost thou do, wilt thou perish? Thou maist do so at an easie rate, seeing in one hour, or one part of an hour, thou maist do that by anger or lust, which thou maist repent for ever. And again, *O cecitas humani generis! nullis sat lachrymis deploranda, ex omnibus Templorum Pulpitis clamatur æternitas, æternitas, æternitas, nos nihilominus presenti ducimur voluptate, adèd perire suave est.* That is, O the blindness of mankind! never enough to be lamented with tears, for though eternity, eternity, eternity, sound from every Pulpit, yet (forgetting that) we are altogether led away with present pleasure and delight, it is so sweet a thing to be damned eternally.

But now (lest my Sun should set in a Cloud) if any pious, though dejected Christian, should say, I have been forsaken a long time, the Vision hath not as yet spoken, I am afraid I have sinned in the same degree with those that must be eternally forsaken.

Be not cast down unless you have better grounds, than what you have said cometh to. Did not you take your time in sinning, and will not you give God his time of answering and pardoning? And as for your fear, put your sins to the test, search, and you may find difference betwixt yours and theirs to your satisfaction, and if you cannot find better marks, take these of mine.

First, The wicked man sinneth continually, for God is not in all his thoughts, and if He be not there, the Devil must, and what he will prompt him to, may easily be conjectured. While as the godly sin but sometimes, when the flesh hath got the better in the conflict.

Secondly, He sins with greediness. The Drunkard drinks, the Swearer swears, the Thief steals, &c. sorry for nothing but that he cannot do more, he hatcheth mischief upon his bed, and when he riseth he practiseth; 'tis meat and drink to him to fill his conscience with offences both against God and Man. While as 'tis tedious to the other, the burden of their sinful Song is alway, *Who is me*; see *David* and *Paul*.

Thirdly, He hunts after it. The young man in the *Proverbs* is said to go out of his way, and pass the corner of the strange Woman's house, begging as it were her proffered em-

embraces. But the godly are dogg'd and hunt-
ed by temptation and suggestions, and embrace
them contrary to their intentions.

Fourthly, He sinneth deliberately. 'Tis not
Passion makes him swear, nor Drunkenness un-
chast, Poverty doth not force him to steal, nor
Riches steal away his heart; but viewing the
feigned honesty, profit and pleasure of sin, he
rejoyceth that he is its captive. But a good
man is always surprized, *David* looking from
his battlement, *Lot* in his drunkenness, and
Peter in his fear.

Fifthly, The wicked man is seldom checkt,
his conscience is seared, or else he takes all di-
vertisements to beat off its blows, he thinks it
an evil Spirit, and therefore he will call for mu-
sic to calm it. But the other is no sooner out
of the way than his heart smites him, and makes
him cry out, I have sinned.

Sixthly, When he falls, he riseth not, judg-
ing himself then, and not till then, to be in his
own element. But the other when he hath
fallen, riseth and runneth faster. Had not *Da-
vid* fallen, we should have wanted his Peniten-
tials, and *Solomon's* Misdemeanours produced
his Recantations.

Lastly, The wicked man remembers his sins
with joy when they are past. O how brave a
fellow

fellow is he, though he hath a snowy head, and toothless jaws, consumed intrals, and withered, nay rotten limbs, that can boast of his murthers, adulteries, rapes, thefts, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, cheating and cozening, and all manner of vice ! This cheers his heart, and makes his face merry. While the godly fetch a sigh, nay an hundred, for every former sin thought on, and for every sigh shed an hundred tears, for every tear a prayer for pardon of the sins of infancy, youth, man-hood, and old age. Judge now by these thine own estate. And now to sum up all, I shall only repeat my Text, with that that goeth before : *The Lord is with you while ye be with him, and if ye seek him he will be found of you ; but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.* The last of which that we may never do, let us ever pray.

Saul



SAUL

Among the *PROPHETS*.

The Third Sermon.

ROM. I. 1.

Paul a servant of Jesus Christ.

They that go down to the Sea in Ships,
 that do business in great waters :
 they see the works of the Lord, and
 his wonders in the deep, saith the *Psal. 107.*
 Kingly Prophet. What wonders and works ? *24, 25.*
 He commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind
 which lifteth up the waves thereof, they mount up
 to the Heaven, they go down again to the depths, *Verf. 26, 27*
 their soule is melted because of trouble ; they *28, 29.*
 reel to and fro, and stagger like drunken men ; and
 are at their wits end. Then they cry unto the Lord
 in

in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses, &c. And may not the like (if no greater) works and wonders be beheld by those that converse with him in his word

Gen. 3. 6, 7. was not *Adam* created immortall? yet by his fall made frail and subject to mortality. Were

Gen. 46. 27 not the Patriarchs despicable at their descent into *Egypt*, being in all but threescore and ten hunger-starved soules? yet made honourable opulent and populous by the same power. Was not *Saul* a mighty King? yet dethron'd and dispossessed by the same hand: what need I multiply Scripture-wonders? since all contained therein is wonderful; and yet nothing (in my Judgment) more to be admired, than what concerneth the Pen-man of this Epistle--*Saul*

Acts 9.

Is he not in the same hour and for any thing we know in the same minute quite altered from one extrem to another? what was in his thoughts? Or what was his discourse to those that journey'd with him, before he saw the light about him and heard the voice saying, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Doubtless they were to this effect; Who, or what is this Jesus these madmen adore? They shall pay dearly for him now: for I have received letters from the high-Priest with power to bring those lawless runagates bound to *Jerusalem* and there shall be nothing wanting in me for the execution of my whole commission. Yet for all this, he no sooner heareth the voice that had charm'd them, but he also is captivated

and (in testimony of his submission) cryeth out, Lord what would'st thou have me to do? Is not this a wonder then worthy our best regard? that an enemy in the heat of blood, should turn his sword to his own breast: resolving sooner to expire thereby than wound, though slightly, the meanest of those he accounted adversaries; and will now suffer himself to be bound and martyred for the same cause he intended (before) to oppose. And that the whole world might see he was no counterfeit, instead of his former Rhetorical flourishes for observance of the Law, he makes use of the most piercing and weighty Arguments to bring more to the obedience of the Gospel. All which is obvious to the meanest Reader of his Divine writings. But to what we intend. And first, that our method may be the more clear, we will divide the whole, and subdivide the first part of the Epistle.

The whole thus:

First, You have a Preface from the 1. to the 17. verse. Secondly, you have the body of the Epistle from the 17. of the 1. Chap. to the 14. of the 15. Thirdly, The Conclusion from thence to the end.

Subdivision.

Again in the first, viz. the Preface, you have the Inscription or Title in the first seven Verses,

wherein is contained *Quis*, the writer *Paul*; *Quid*, What he writeth, viz. the Doctrine of the Gospel; *Quibus*, to whom he writeth, 'tis to the *Romans*; and Fourthly you have *votum Apostoli*, the Apostles with, *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*.

The Penman then is *Paul*, the same that before was named *Saul*. About the first of these names diverse Authors are of diverse minds some would have it Hebrew, some Greek, and some Latine. Others that he tooke it to himself after the conversion of *Sergius Paulus*. Others that it was changed by God, as *Peter* was called *Cephas* and the sons of *Zebedee* *Boanerges*. *Quibus neesset inferior*, saith *Theoph.* *Mutatum est illi nomen*. But after all these, it seemeth most probable (as the learned Doctor *Hamond* saith) that being a Jew born in the City of *Rome*, he had two names given him at his Circumcision, *Saul* a Jewish, and *Paul* a Roman name, as may be gathered from *Acts* 13. 9. *Saul* which is also called *Paul*: yet there is not so great difference about the names, as there is matter of wonder in what followeth; A servant of Jesus Christ,

Quantum mutatus ab illo!

Paul a Jew of *Tarsus*, *Paul*, or rather *Saul* that imbrued his hands in the blood of the first Martyr,

Martyr St. Stephen; and made havock of the Church of Christ, hardning his heart and hands with binding those, whom faith had loosed, that vomited out blasphemies against the Son of God, is he become the servant of Jesus Christ? yes,

Qui color albus erat nunc est contrarius albo.

He that before was a slave to his lusts, and an enemy to truth, is now become the servant of Jesus Christ.

Take then his mind in this text to be as if he had said, Religious *Romans*, Let not my name *Saul* nor those other things that have made me formidable to you heretofore, deterre you from hearing my words, or embracing my doctrine; since by the grace and speciall favour of my God I am become a fellow-servant & believer with you, and not onely so, but in an immediate manner set apart to the preaching of the same Gospel you desire to believe. I earnestly intreat your attention, assuring you that there is nothing now more dear unto me, next to a crucified Jesus, than your eternal salvation. From the words thus clear I shall lay down these three doctrines or propositions.

1. That there is no condition so despicable nor quality so depraved, but God can alter when he intendeth the edification of his Church.
2. That the greatest Saints have been Sinners.

E

3. That

3. That it is a happy change when men hate the service of sin and become the Servants of Jesus Christ.

Mat. 4. 18.

Mat. 9. 9.
Rom. 1. 1.

For clearing of the first we must consider what manner of persons the blessed Apostles were before their calling. As for their outward conditions, were they not as low as low could be? poor fisher men. And as for their qualities it may be presum'd that neither Mathew nor *Saul* were better then they should have been. The one being a Toll-gatherer or Publican, and the other a blasphemmer, a persecutor, an injurious person, and yet we see the one is made a Disciple, the other an Apostle,

And thus God seemeth to deal for these reasons :

1 Sam. 17.
28.

First that the world may see that he is no respecter of persons. When *Saul* was made King, it is not to be doubted but that there were in *Israel* many as beautifull and more fit than he, and yet he is chosen. Were there not in the Camp of *Israel* many stronger than *David* that might have undertaken the duell? yea surely! the sleighting and opprobrious expressions of *Eliab* confirm it. With whom hast thou left thy few sheep? yet he is chosen to fight for God. In fine, were there not wiser men in the Jewish Church, than the twelve Apostles, and more calme spirited and better temper'd
(even

Saul among the Prophets.

§ 1

(even in moralls) than *Saul*? surely there were, and yet they are chosen to be God's mouth to the nations.

Secondly, Because he will keep men from boasting or thinking better of themselves than is fit. Had he called the high priests, they might have thought it was because of their dignitie. Had he called the *Pharisees*, they would have said their seeming Religion and outward profession was the cause of it. The princes and nobles they might have said it was because of their grandeur and superiority in the world. But that all their mouths might be stopped, he called the foolish & contemptible things of the world, that they might confound the wise, viz those poor fishermen that could bragg of nothing but that they had obtained mercy.

1 Tim. i.
16.

Thirdly, He doth not look at the qualities and conditions of men when he intendeth to call them to his service, that he may be known to have that royall prerogative of changing the heart. Was not catching of fish the maine design of the four first called Disciples as may be gathered from that expression? Master we have toiled all night and have catch'd nothing. Yet see how soon the case is altered. Christ had no sooner said, Fear not, &c. than they soar aloft into another sphear and forgetting their trouble leave all and follow him.

Luke 5.5.

Verse 10.

Saul among the Prophets.

Fourthly, He looks neither at qualities nor conditions, that none may despair of his grace and mercy. Poor men, extortioners, persecutors, blasphemers, thieves and proud men, have been called, and so may such yet; God's hand is not shortned.

The Doctrine thus proved, we shall apply thus :

Doth not God look at the conditions and qualities of men, when he intends to call them to his service ? Then let us admire his Wisdom, for here it appeareth in a high degree. Who can be a better teacher of Humility, than he that hath been in a low condition ? Who a greater inveigher against Extortion and Cruelty, than he that hath sensibly felt the cruelty of both ? Who a more tender-hearted Physitian, than he that hath been mortally wounded ? All which we may see in those now glorified Souls whom he then called.

Secondly, From hence we may take occasion to reprove those unhappy wretches, who slight all outward calls and inward motions : They see they may be good. Were not some of those already spoken of as bad as they ? and yet became God's darlings and bosome-friends ?

Object. 1. But 'tis like we would be good too, if Christ would immediately call us as he did them.

O ye foolish and perverse Souls! Why tempt *Ans.*
 ye Christ? Was it not enough that he stayed
 on Earth thirty three years, pointing out the
 way to life eternal? Would you have him come
 down again to teach you the way? Was not a
Sequere me. Follow me, the whole of their Calls?
 And have you not the same still? Is he not
 standing on Mount Zion, holding out the gol-
 den Scepter of his peace to you in his holy
 Word, which he spoke with his blessed Mouth;
 and seal'd with his precious Blood? If this will
 not serve your turns, assure your selves there is
 a day coming, when his all-awakening Voice
 shall make you appear, to receive the sentence
 of, *Go ye cursed.* And this for the first Propo-
 sition.

The second is, *That the greatest Saints have
 been Sinners.*

So much may be gathered from the first
 word in the Text. Holy *St. Paul*, once a
 bloody and cruel *Saul*. *Abraham*, sometimes
 a lyar, yet afterward Father of the faithful.
Moses, *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, *Jonah*, *Ma-
 thew*, *Zachary*, and all the rest of those Worthies;
 that now walk with the Lamb in white, have
 had their failings and infirmities, some less,
 some more, yet are placed now above this Er-
 ratick Globe, in those Mansions that are un-
 speakable and full of glory.

And all the Reason we shall give at present, is ; Because all are the Children of sinful *Adam*, who are all with him concluded under sin, *Gal.* 3.22.

The Inferences from this Doctrine might be many, a few of which we shall propose thus :

First, To caution all not to make those glorified Saints patrons to our sins, and patterns of our lives, so far as they were faulty ; but covering that with our love, which Christ hath covered with his Blood ; their amendment and true repentance may be our exemplar, in the whole course of our Journey through this valley of tears. *St. Chrysostom* pressing the same thing, is of the same mind : Do not (saith he) think that *David's* fault was recorded, that we should imitate it, but it was proposed for our rising. Let us therefore walk circumspectly and watchfully, for we are not wiser than *David*, who when he had neglected his duty but a little, was thrown headlong into the very gulf of sin, yet rose again. Look not therefore upon him only as he sinned, but as he wiped away his sin again. And therefore is this Story written (to wit of *David's* fall) not that ye should consider him only as fallen, but admire his rising, that when thou fallest thy self, thou maist know how to rise. To this purpose also *St. Austin* ; Many will fall with *David*, but they will not rise with him. This example is not pro-

proposed, that thou maist fall; but that if thou dost fall, thou maist rise again. Beware then that thou fall not: Let not the falling of the rich be a pleasure to the poor, but let the falls of great ones be a terror to those below them. For this cause then it is proposed, for this it is written, for this it is often read in the Churches, that they who have not fallen (hearing) may not fall, and that they who have fallen may rise again.

Secondly, To comfort and open a door of hope to all Believers; Have the greatest Saints been Sinners? Then be not you discouraged; your God is the same as when he forgave them, his bowels of mercy and tender compassion are no fewer, he hath the same ears to receive your prayers, and the same bottle for your tears. Hence, saith St. Basil, Peter denied his Master thrice, not that he might fall, but that thou mightst have consolation. And St. Bernard; You have heard (saith he) what mercy our Apostles have obtained, that now, none of us being checked in the Court of Conscience, should be confounded, by reason of our by-past sins, more than is meet. 'Tis like thou hast committed some sin against thy Generation; but hast thou done more than Paul? What and if against thy Religion? Hast thou done more than Peter? Yet notwithstanding all this, they (repenting from the bottom of the heart) have not only obtain'd Salvation, but Holiness also;

do thou likewise, for the Scripture speaketh for thee,

Thirdly, Have the greatest Saints been Sinners? Then let none despair. Your sins are not so great, but Christ's merits are greater; your misery is not so deep, but his mercy is deeper; your Souls are not so deformed, but Christ your Saviour's Blood can make them white and beautiful. Who should despair, saith St. Bernard, for the greatest offence, since Saul who was breathing out threatnings against the people of God, was made a vessel of election? Who should say, I am pressed down with the weight of my sins, I cannot rise to better studies? when in the very Journey, wherein he thirsted after Christian blood, and had his breast swelled with inveterate malice, this fierce Persecutor is suddenly changed into a faithful Preacher. Despair not, saith St. Chrysostom, for though our wounds be grievous, yet they are not incurable, our Physitian being such as hath provided several ways for our cure.

Fourthly, Have the greatest Saints been Sinners? Then if we would become Saints, let us take the same course they did. They turned to God by true and unfeigned repentance, let us do so too: They importun'd the Throne of Grace with incessant prayers, let us do so too: They performed those works of mercy commanded by God, let us do so too, that after
the

the miseries of this life (as they) we may enter into the joy of our Lord.

A servant of Jesus Christ.

Whence I gather,

That it is a happy change when man leaveth the service of sin, and becometh a servant of Jesus Christ.

That this may be the more clear, I shall lay down these two things, namely,

First, What estate man is in while he serveth sin.

Secondly, What, when he serveth Christ.

To the first, Man while he serveth sin, his condition is most deplorable, and that for these Reasons:

First, Because he that should have his Will run in a straight line with Heaven's Precepts, setteth himself fully in opposition to his Maker: And 'tis no wonder, there being such a contrariety betwixt the Nature of a holy God, and that of a sinful man, which chooseth the greatest evil, and deserteth the *Summum bonum*, or chief good.

Secondly, His condition is sad, because he runneth in arrear with God, for which the Law

Saul among the Prophets.

Law bindeth him either to payment or punishment, the first of which of himself he can never make, and therefore *nolens volens* (without repentance) must endure the other, *Mat. 5. 25, 26.*

Thirdly, While man serveth sin, he maketh God his enemy, and incurreth his displeasure; and is it not a fearful thing to fall into the hand of an angry God? *Moses* thought himself in a strait when he had the Red Sea before him, a bloody *Pharaoh* behind him, and a plain and barren Wilderness to encamp in; but this was his comfort, God was his Friend. But oh! what strait? what a miserable condition are they in, that make the Lord their Enemy? for to such every drop of Water is a Sea, every Man a *Pharaoh*, every Beast a Fury, every Stone a stumbling Block, and all prepared for their overthrow and utter ruine.

Fourthly, While man serveth sin, he hateth God's presence, and seeketh (with *Adam*) to shelter himself in the croud of the World, so as he may neither see his face nor hear his voice: Even like a man that is in prison, and knoweth himself guilty of death, he is affrighted at nothing more than the sight of his Judge, and the hearing of his just sentence.

Fifthly, While man serveth sin, he desireth that he can never nor must ever obtain, being only

only of *Balaam's* temper, all such foolish wishes vanishing in smoke. What can render a man more miserable in this life, than to have a desire to eat and drink, and cannot have so much as a morsel of bread, or a cup of water? What can make a Soul more unhappy, than to have wishes (vain I mean) for Heaven and Happiness, and shall never attain it.

Sixthly and lastly, He that serveth sin is his own destroyer, *Hos. 13. 9.* They are the Authors of their own danger, saith St. *Ambrose*, because they draw not near to God. And St. *Basil*, They have deprived themselves of that salvation which is from thee, for salvation fleeth not from them but they from it. From this you may see that the change would be happy.

Now we will see what estate man is in while he serveth Christ.

As in several respects (while in the former estate) he was miserable, so now in all respects he is happy and honourable.

For clearing this we will consider,

1. *The Master.*
2. *The Service.*
3. *The Reward.*

He

He that hath a mind to change service, must study to know who shall be his next Master, lest he goes from evil to worse: But here there is no such fear; for 'tis neither the Devil, the World, nor the Flesh, Riches, Honour, Beauty, Learning, Strength, long Life, nor any Creature or created Being, must challenge any propriety here, but it is Jesus Christ.

And now methinks ye begin already to see the happiness of the change, though I hope you may see it better, if ye observe with me,

1. *Who this Jesus is,*

2. *What he is.*

Who is he? The Son of God, the Heir of Heaven and Earth; he it is that hath written upon his vesture and thigh, King of Kings and Lord of Lords; he that made the World; he of whom the Prophets spake; he that appeared to the Patriarchs in the form of an Angel, who in the fulness of time was clothed with humane Flesh, and on the Cross in a gore of blood, when he glorified his Father, satisfied his Justice, and saved us.

This I have given as a taste, being more able to say that I know him not as I ought, than that I know him as I should; however the searchers of the Scripture will find, him, who is eternal life,

Secondly,

Secondly, What is he? this can best be resolved by serious consideration of what he is not, Yet if any are resolved to change Masters (and would to God that all had so purposed) I shall point out some of his properties, faults he hath none.

And first, He is an humble Master, *Mat. 11. 29.* *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly:* These are his own words; which if ye will not believe, hear what his Servant and our Apostle saith, *Phil. 2. vers. 6, 7, 8.* *Let this mind also be in you which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto the death of the Cross.* If ever there was a man in the World (as a learned Worthy of our Age saith) that had reason to be puffed up, sure enough it was he. Was not his Knowledge (like himself) infinite? though never any boasted so little of it, living obscure in a corner of *Galilee*, till he was thirty years of age. And was not his Power as great as that: *I can* (saith he, *Mat. 26. 55.*) *pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve Legions of Angels.* And yet such was his Humility, that he did not insult over the meanest Creature: When they would have made him a King, and given him a Palace; he chose rather
to

to abide in the Desert with such as himself, poor humble men. In sum, His Humility was so great, that he stooped to do his own Servants the meanest service, (washed their feet.) and heard the petitions of the poorest Beggars, and does yet so ; for though he be made higher than the Heavens, yet he condescends to dwell with sinful mortals.

Is this all ? No.

For as he is Humble, so he is Loving, full of tenderness and bowels of compassion to those that deserve nothing, yea towards those that deserve ill at his hands. Should I insist upon this, I should begin long before the World's existence ; for, he loveth with an everlasting Love. And as for his Life, was it not all made up of divine flames ? As witness his indefatigable pains for our good upon the deaf, the dumb, the blind, the lame, the Demoniacks, Paralyticks, Lunaticks, yea even upon the dead themselves. His very Enemies tasted largely of his Bounty ; for when he was to breathe out his last, it was for their good : *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

Is this all ? No.

For as he is humble and loving, so most Pious. Though he was the Son of God, yet he always

always remembred that he was the Son of Man, acknowledging his Father upon all occasions.

When he was to eat Bread, he blessed before he broke it; and *Lazarus* is not raised from the dead, without the payment of his devotion to Heaven. Did he not many times forsake the company even of his Disciples, for a more uninterrupted converse with his Father? spending whole nights in prayer.

Is this all? No.

As he is humble, loving and pious, so most Charitable. Never any extended an empty hand to him, and withdrew it so; never any ask'd alms, and went away empty: So far were they from that, that he always gave more than they asked. When the Paralytick was brought to him, no doubt it was the restauration of his Limbs, and that only, they looked after: But his Charity exceeding their demands, added the forgiveness of his sins. Mat. 9. 2.

Is this all? No.

As he is humble, loving, pious and charitable, so the most Patient person that ever the Earth bore. This the calm receipt of contumelies in this life, and matchless sufferance of hellish and inhumane indignities at his death, sufficiently declare. His serene Brow was never cloud-

clouded ; nor did his Eyes dart a beam of revenge ; his Tongue never uttered a clamorous or indecent expression ; nor his Hands offer violence to any ; but *as a sheep is dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth.* So well tempered were all his Affections, that he always eyed the future glory, not the present grief :
 Isa. 53. 7. *For the joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross, despising the shame.*

Is this all ? No.

For as he is humble, loving, pious, charitable and patient, so most Just. Gave he not to *Cæsar* the things that were his, and to God the things that were God's ? He will as soon deny himself, as suffer the least service to be done without a reward. A cup of cold water shall have its retribution ; a sigh, a groan, a tear, a prayer, a merciful and charitable work, shall have an eternal recompence. And now I hope you see the happiness of the change, when the service of sin is left, for that of Jesus Christ.

Use 1.

Let what is said then serve to reprove those that love to live, and resolve to die in the service of sin : For let such perswade themselves what they will of their imaginary happiness, of all men they are most miserable. Their Master is a Tyrant, proud, spiteful, wicked, uncharitable, impatient and unjust ; their service is Soul-damning slavery, when it appears in
 its

its best robes ; and their reward eternal flames,

But if any such should say, I think the change Object, happy, and I would willingly become Christ's Servant ; but I fear I am so far engaged to the other service, that I cannot get off.

If these thoughts of thine be unfained, thou *Ans.* hast made a good progress : If it be so, fear no former engagement. Hast thou made a covenant with death and hell ? It is void : This Master to whose service I invite thee, came into the World to disanul such engagements. 'Tis true, thou canst not clear thy self, but thy new Master is so loving and charitable, that he will knock off thy spiritual fetters, and pour the Balm of Gilead into the wounds of thy Soul.)

But I am afraid my condition will not suit with Object. 2.
bim.

If thou layest thy sins aside, be thy outward *Ans.* condition what it will, thou art fit for his service. What art thou ? A King ? So is he. Art thou a King's Son ? So is he. Art thou a Judge ? So is he. Art thou a Priest ? So is he. Art thou a Husbandman ? So is he. Art thou a Shepherd ? So is he. Art thou poor and contemptible in the eye of the World ? So was he. The Foxes had holes, and the Birds of the air had nests, but the Son of Man had not where

to lay his head. Let none of these things skare thee from his service.

Object. 3. But if I should enter into his service, I am afraid he will cast me off again, and then I shall be worse than before.

Ans. Fear nothing of this; for whom he once loveth, he loveth to the end; the gifts and calling of God are without repentance: Be thou but careful to serve him, and if thou do amiss at any time through ignorance or inadvertency, beg pardon and forbear; for he is gracious and merciful, and ready to forgive.

Object. 4. O but I am afraid his service is hard.

Ans. Granting it to be so, thou maist comfort thy self with these two things:

First, That the time of thy service here is but short (even a moment) in respect of eternity.

2 Tim. 4. 8. Secondly, The reward is great, exceeding great: 'Tis a Crown, 'tis a Kingdom, 'tis an Inheritance, 'tis an eternal weight of glory.

2 Pet. 1. 4. But I add also what he himself saith, Mat. 1. 1. verse 30. My yoke is easie, and my burden light: And what his Servant St. John out of 1 Joh. 5. 3. experience vouches; His Commandments are not grievous.

Saul among the Prophets.

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*I would willingly offer him my service, if I Object. 3.
knew where he dwelleth.*

I thought that by this time you might have *Ans.*
known, seeing neither Earth nor Hell can af-
ford one with such endowments. Where then
can he be but in Heaven? And there he is, his *Psal. 89. 6.*
Throne is there; whither that ye may steer a *Psal. 11. 4.*
direct course, take the ship of Faith, helm of
the Word, sails of Hope, and wind of Prayer,
nothing doubting, for they will carry you to
the place where he dwelleth, and possess you
of his service.

Is the change happy? Then let me exhort *Use 2.*
all such as have not yet laid down their resolu-
tions whom to serve, to accept of this Master,
who hath sent me to tell them, that whatso-
ever happiness he promiseth in his Word, they
may expect its performance, with infinite addi-
tions.

Is the change happy? Then let such as be *Use 3.*
his Servants already, from hence be fully assu-
red of their expected joy, whatever their and
his enemies say to the contrary. *For the moun-* *Iſa. 54. 10.*
tains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but
my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall
the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord
that hath mercy on thee.

Object.

But now if a truly religious Soul shall say, I know I have assurance enough on God's part (who is unchangeable) yet I find the wings of my Soul so often slow, that I fear I but deceive my self, and am not really his Servant.

Answer.

Though it might be answer satisfactory enough, to tell such, that these very fears argue sincerity; yet for further satisfaction, I shall lay down ten Marks, whereby a good Servant may be known. As

Phil. 3. 8.

First, A good Servant is wholly guided by the will of his Master (laying aside his own). So the Servants of Christ comply with his Will, whatever flesh and blood say to the contrary; they count all things but loss and dung for the gaining of Christ.

Act. 21. 13.

Secondly, A good Servant puts himself into his Master's power, who may dispose of him as he pleaseth: So do the Servants of Christ. A Gibbet, an Ax, a Saw, a Rack, a Fire, or whatsoever may be invented for cutting the thread of their lives, is more welcome than all the treasures of the Indies, if he say it shall be so. I am ready (saith St. Paul) not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus. How excellent and worthy observation and imitation was that saying of Ignatius, Let the fire, the Cross, wild beasts, breaking of bones, rending of members, and bruising of the whole body, yea and the torments of the Devil seize upon me, provided I

may

may partake of Jesus Christ. And that of *Luther*, *Mallet ruerer cum Christo quam regnare cum Cesare*; I had rather be ruined with than reign without Christ. Such magnanimity have his Servants.

Thirdly, A good Servant will be of his Master's Religion (provided it be good) that all cause of dissention may be taken away: So the Servants of Christ, with sincerity of heart observe his Precepts, that he hath ordained as means to bring them to happiness. — *O how love I thy Law! It is my meditation all the day.* Psal. 119. 97.

Fourthly, A good Servant seeks not his own glory, but the glory of his Master; witness *Job's* Message to *David* at the Siege of *Rabbah*: 2 Sam. 12. 27, 28. So the Servants of Christ when they have done all, they count themselves unprofitable Servants, concluding all with, *Not unto us O Lord, but unto thy Name give glory.* Psal. 115. 1.

Fifthly, A good Servant thinketh himself so much beholding to none as to his own Master: So the Servants of Christ when they consider his transcendent Wisdom and Power in their Creation, his ineffable Goodness in their Redemption, and those daily experiences of their preservation, then cry they out, *Whom have we in Heaven but thee?* Psal. 73. 25.

Sixthly, A good Servant will be sure to speak all the good he can of his Master: So did *Abraham's* Servant, and so do the Servants of Christ. *In his Temple doth every one speak of his glory.* Psal. 29. 9.

Gal. 6. 10.

Seventhly, A good Servant loveth all those that speak well of his Master. This did *David*, and thus do all the rest of Christ's Friends; witness St. *John's* so often pressing it as a duty to love one another (meaning fellow-Christians) and St. *Paul's*, *Let us do good to all men, but especially to the household of faith.*

Eighthly, A good Servant is content to be with his Master in prosperity and adversity: So Christ's Servants are not afraid of a storm; their Master is as lovely in their eyes when he is represented eating gall, drinking vinegar, and wearing a Crown of thorns, as when he is ulhered in with *Hosanna's*, or attended with Angels.

Ninthly, A good Servant will live and die with his Master: So those that have once tasted of Christ's Sweetness, say with the Apostle *Peter*, *Whither shall we go? for thou hast the words of eternal life.* And with *Polycarp*, *I have been his Servant fourscore and six years, all which time he never once hurt me, I will not speak ill of, or leave him now.*

Jam. 1.

Lastly, A good Servant expecteth all from his Master: So the Servants of God and Christ, *David* doth so, *Psal. 44. 6, 7.* *For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me, but thou hast saved us from our enemies:* From him cometh every good gift and perfect donation. The Devil is a liar, the World is deceitful, the Flesh is frail; but in him is their repose. Who-soever then knoweth these Marks in himself, need:

needeth not doubt but he is Christ's Servant ; of whom I can say no more than what the Queen of *Sheba* said to *Solomon*, *Happy are thy men, happy are those thy servants who stand before thee continually, and that bear thy wisdom.*

This for the happiness of the change, in respect of the Master.

I come now to my second Consideration promised, which was, *The Service*, which also maketh the change happy, if we look at

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. <i>The Pleasure</i> | } of this Service. |
| 2. <i>The Profit</i> | |
| 3. <i>The Honour</i> | |
| 4. <i>The Innocency</i> | |
| 5. <i>The Acceptableness</i> | |

First then, Of all Services this is the most pleasant. *Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord is good (saith David) sing praises to his Name, for it is pleasant.* All other Services breed tediousness first or last ; but this delight. This is also affirmed by the man after God's own heart, *Psal. 40.8. I delight to do thy Will, O my God, yea thy Law is within my heart.* In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul. Thy Testimonies are my delight and my Counsellors. It is a pleasant thing (saith Solomon) to behold the Sun. But O ! How much more pleasant is it to behold the Son of Righteousness, as one of his domesticks, who is compounded of pleasure, delight and Soul-satisfaction ?

Psal. 139.3.

Psal. 94.19.

Psal. 119.

24

tisfaction? witness the transcendent sweetness of his Presence, and the refreshing influences of his Spirit. If we look into a Garden of our own planting, and there see every thing verdant and thriving, the Trees blooming, Roses budding, Herbs displaying their leaves, and Flowers their beauties, with their aromaticall perfumes: Doth it not breed a kind of delight and pleasure in us? It doth. But of what continuance? Short enough; for suddenly the fruit and leaves fall from the trees, and the sap to the root; so that they are in a manner dead, the Roses blown, and the Herbs withered. But the Service of Jesus makes and keeps a continued Summer in the Souls of all his Servants: There the Trees of Prayer, Meditation and Charity, are like *Aaron's Rod*, budding blooming, and bringing forth fruit at once. But

Secondly, As this Service is pleasant, so it is profitable. *1 Tim. 4. 8. Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come.* It puts us in possession of all that Heaven hath promised, and what is it he hath not? For this life, what is more advantageous than protection? And this we are assured of both in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old doth he not promise, that he will be a God to *Abraham*, and to his seed after him? In the New is not the same promise renewed? *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you.* Prosperity, health, victory over enemies, and whatsoever conduceth

Gen. 17. 7.

Joh. 14. 18.

to

to

to our being and well-being, are promised. And not only these here, but Heaven, the beatifick Vision of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the company of Angels, and glorified Spirits of just men made perfect, freedom from sin and misery, with the fruition of all things, able to make the Soul eternally happy.

But I am a Husbandman, saith one ; I am a Object. Mechanick, saith another ; I am a Merchant, saith a third : What will godliness or the service of Christ profit us ?

It profits you much in this, That it bids you *Answer.* look to equity in all your actions, where God's glory and your Neighbour's good are concerned. If thou art a Husbandman or a Mechanick, it teacheth thee to be content with that state of life God hath placed thee in, and not repine ; it being a Statute-Royal enacted in the Court of Heaven, That thou must earn thy bread with the sweat of thy brow. If thou be a Merchant, it will keep thee from false weights and ballances, and from committing that hainous and hateful sin of Usury.

Thirdly, As this Service is pleasant and profitable, so it is honourable. *Isa. 43. 4. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee ; therefore I will give men for thee, and people for thy life. Isa. 58. 13, 14. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and*

and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thy self in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy Father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. That Service may truly be said to be honourable, that maketh the worker so; but this alone you see is such, and all other will be found otherwise. If we serve the Devil, the World, and our own Flesh, after whatsoever manner, we shall find that the service is not only dishonourable in the eyes of God, but also in the eyes of good men; while as the service of Christ is honourable in both.

Fourthly, As it is pleasant, profitable and honourable, so it is a most Innocent service: Not because they that serve him, cannot do evil, or because of impotency and want of means so to do, but because they want a Will to do it. (Those, as you heard before, being wholly resigned to Christ, to be ruled and disposed of at his pleasure) and because they make it their business to serve God by innocent and holy lives, and have Christ's Innocency imputed to them. This the Psalmist professeth, when he saith, *I will wash mine hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord.* It is innocent, because they do harm to none, but as much good as they can, especially to

to the household of faith. It is also innocent in respect of the event ; he that believeth or serveth Christ shall never be confounded.

Fifthly, As it is pleasant, profitable, honourable and innocent, so it is a most Acceptable service. *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted?* That is, Thou shalt surely be accepted. Gen. 4. 7. When our Apostle had shown the Romans, Rom. 14. wherein the Kingdom of God (or Grace) consisted, that it was righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and not in indifferent things, as meat and drink, he subjoyneth in the next Verse, *That he that serveth Christ in those things, is acceptable to God, and approved of men.* Verse 19. And now I hope the change is happy in respect of the Service.

But before we pass to the third Consideration, give me leave to bring this home to our selves by Application, thus :

Is there, and may there be such a change, as is pleasant, profitable, honourable, innocent and acceptable? Then let me exhort all of you, and my self, as we love our Souls, to quit our old Service, which at the best is but *Amarum dulce*, a bitter sweet, unprofitable, dishonourable, liable to punishment, and altogether despicable: γλυκύ πικρόν. Which that we may do, let us mind those that are ready to court us to this change. As

First, God himself inviteth us to this Service. *But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers,* Jer. 3. 1. *yet return unto me, saith the Lord.* And in the 7th

7th Verse, *And I said, after she had done all these things, turn unto me.* And that he may either turn us, or leave us inexcusable, he personates all those Relations, that may of right claim our obedience. He calls as a Father, *Jer. 31. 20. Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child?* for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy on him, saith the Lord. As a Mother, *Isa. 49. 15. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee.* As a Physician, *Isa. 1. 18. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wooll.* As a Nurse, *Hos. 11. 1. When Ephraim was a child, I loved him.* And Verse 3. *I taught him also to go, taking him by the arms, &c.* As a liberal giver, *Hos. 14. 5. I will be as the dew unto Israel.* And lastly, as an omnipotent preserver, *Isa. 43. 2. When thou passest through the water I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for I am the Lord thy God, the holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.* Who would not think that these near Relations, and melting expressions, would thaw the most frozen heart? What more dear than a tender and loving Father, will we not hear him?

him? What more indulgent than a Mother, and will we not hearken? What tending more to our health than the advice of the Soul-Physitian, and shall we not receive it? What greater care than that of a Nurse, and shall we not suffer it? What more profitable than favour with Heaven's Store-keeper, and do we despise him? What more desirable than preservation, and do we not prize it?

Secondly, The Son of God invites us, *Mat. 11.28. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls.* And not with bare words are we invited, but with that Heaven-amazing cry, *Eli, Eli, Lammafabachthani,* His invitations are real, not complemental; for he hath opened his breast, and shewen us his heart, that we might not distrust his promises, if we came into his service.

Thirdly, The good Angels are inviters, being, as the Apottle saith, ministring Spirits, and filling the Heavens with their joys when we enter into Christ's Service. These we must consider first. Luk. 15.7.

Secondly, See what lamentation Christ maketh, when we will not come. Sorrowful expressions are not enough to discover his grief, but in passionate bitterness and bitter passion, he drowns those Eyes brighter than the Sun, and bedews those Cheeks, those spicy Beds, with

with the peerless and precious drops of sinless,
 Mat. 23. 37. (but Soul-saving) tears. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.*

Thirdly, Consider, and that seriously, that the World endures only in expectation of our coming. And can we think, that the vast expence in maintaining this mighty Fabrick is for nought? No. 'Tis not that the wicked may favour Hell and despise Heaven, but it is for God's Jewels, his Servants, his Elect's sake. *Joh. 10. 16. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.*

Fourthly, Consider the great preparation that is made in Heaven for such as come to this Service. And that brings me to the last thing proposed, to prove the happiness of the change; and that is, *The Reward.*

Which is a recompence out of mercy given to the Servants of Christ, after all their labours in his service, and that is Heaven, with its endless joy and happiness.

Now that this of it self is enough to make the change happy; Consider yet the Names and Titles it hath in the Book of God, all things in it else being beyond our capacity, till Heaven immortalize us, and make us see as we
 are

are seen, and know as we are known; together with the Company and Employment.

As for the Names, they are many: As

First, 'Tis called a City, *Heb. 11. 16. For he hath prepared for them a City*, and that not a little one. *Rev. 21. 10. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high Mountain, and shewed me the great City*; no doubt it is so, seeing there are many Mansions in it, prepared for millions of millions of glorified Bodies after the day of Judgment. *Joh. 14. 1.*

Secondly, 'Tis called Light, *Col. 1. 12. Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*; that is, the ever glorious, and ever lightsome, and blessed inheritance of the Saints in Heaven.

And it is so called, because there, there is no need of Sun or Moon, being as it were all a great Sun from every point, pouring out whole rivers of heavenly Light. And indeed it cannot be otherwise, since 'tis said, That the Wall of it is Jasper, the Foundation precious Stones, the Gates Pearls, the Streets paved with pure Gold. *Rev. 21. 18, 19, 20, 21.* O! saith one on the place, How brave, how glorious, how beautiful, how glistering, how gorgeous, how admirable a City is this? For if the Gates be Pearls, and the Streets Gold, what are the inner Rooms? What the dining and lodging Rooms? O! How unspeakable is the glory of this City, seeing Kings shall throw down their Crowns and Scepters before it?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, 'Tis called a Kingdom, *Mat. 25.34.* *Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.* Do not we hold Kingdoms to be the top of earthly happineffes? Else how should there be so much strife about them? Who hath not observed, saith Sir *Walter Raleigh*, What labour, practice, peril, bloodshed and cruelty, the Kings of the Earth, and Princes of the World have undergone, exercised, taken upon them, and committed, to make themselves and their Issue Masters of the World? But, though this be far better, being a heavenly Kingdom, how little contest is there about it? Now all the Readers of this may see how the World befools it self, in doting on the shadow, neglecting the substance, seeing this Kingdom exceedeth the other, as far as an earthly King doth a Beggar.

Fourthly, 'Tis called a Crown, a Crown of glory, *1 Pet. 5.4.* *And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of glory.* A Crown of splendour, *Mat. 13.43.* *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.* A Crown of life, *Rev. 2.10.* *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the Crown of life.* A Crown of riches; none comparable to it, both within and without: Within, this Crown is lined with the true and perfect knowledge of God: For now we see but darkly and in a glass, but then face to face, with true and unspeakable joy. And ye
now

now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoyce, and your joy none taketh from you. Without, your Bodies wearing this Crown, shall have spirituality; they are as the Angels of God. Clarity, or brightness, *Phil. 3. 21.* Our vile bodies shall be changed, and made like Christ's glorious Body. Immortality; there is no Death in Heaven, but that shall be swallowed up in immortality. Mat. 22. 30.

Lastly, 'Tis called a Sabbath, *Isa. 66. 23.* And it shall come to pass, that from one new Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship me, saith the Lord. And 'tis thus called because of rest, sanctification, sacrifices, new cloathing, gathering together of the Elect to their everlasting refreshment.

This for the Names of the Reward. The next thing is

The Company. From commerce and converse with mortals, we become the associates of the ever-living God, that created all things; fellow-heirs with Christ, the World's Redeemer; beloved companions of the Holy Ghost, that sanctifieth sinners; Seraphims, Cherubins, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Vertues, Archangels, Angels, (if some name this heavenly Host aright) Prophets, Apostles, Confessors, Martyrs, shall be the meanest of our fellow-Citizens. And

Lastly, For our *Employment*, it shall be natural to our glorified state. There shall be no sweat of face through hard labour, dimness of

G.

eyes,

eyes, stiffness of sinews, no tears, no sighs, no cries, no fears; what we do shall flow freely from us, viz. singing of Hymns and Hallelujahs to him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

And now I hope you see the change happy, and I am perswaded that you are convinced of the truth of what I have delivered; and wishing you to continue so, take in the last place this Exhortation; and so I conclude the time and Text.

For God's and your Soul's sakes, leave all your other Services, and take this while it may be had. Now is the time or never; now is the day of Grace; now is the Saviour of the World supplicating sinners; now the door of Mercy is open, and the Bowels of the Son of God melt and gush out with infinite streams of divine Love toward you. Come then, though it be at the ninth or eleventh hour, not doubting but you shall receive your penny.

Take St. Paul for your Guide and Patron, who though he was as one born out of time, yet became the Servant of Jesus Christ. To whom be Glory, Amen.

THE



THE
REWARD
 OF THE
FAITHFULL.

The Fourth Sermon.

REV. II. 10.

*Be thou faithfull unto Death, and I
 will give thee a Crown of Life.*



Ere I come hereto day with a deed,
 or disposition for every one of
 you in my hand ; by which you
 might have free, and full possession
 of some great and profitable
 employment, city, town, village, or Island ;
 I question not but ye would press hard to per-
 form

Acts 3. 6.

form the condition. For who would not set his Cottage on fire, that he might ever after live in a Palace, part with a team of horses, to enjoy a Lordship, fast two days, to fare sumptuously all his life, for a while endure reproach, to acquire never dying honour, or a long sickness, for a continuall health? I have none of these, but as *Peter* and *Iohn* gave the lame-man almes, Better and greater than Silver or gold, so do I bring you, and every one of you better deeds and dispositions, than these before mentioned; better I say because 'tis infallibly true and sure, being dictated by the Spirit, and sealed with the blood of the living God; Better because of the greatness of the disposition; it is not a simple employment, a City, a Town, a Village, an Island, but 'tis that would be treason to desire here, 'tis a Crown. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life.*

Verse 8.

These words are a part of that Epistle written in *Patmos* by *Iohn the Divine* to the Church of *Smyrna*, in which after he hath given account of the author, describing him by two grand Epithets; First and Last, that is, without beginning without end, and so eternal: He saith,

First, That he was risen from the dead, who was dead and is alive, and so more powerful than any that could afflict them, he goeth on in commendation of them, that he knew their works, that is, all their actions in general; their tribulation, poverty, their spirituall riches; their enemies; and those he describes first by their hypo-

hypocrisie, that say they are Jews and are not.

Secondly, By their Impiety, that they are of the synagogue of Satan ; that is, a company assembled, worshipping and serving the Devil, by errors, and prophaneness ; yet pretending to be the holy people of God ; all this you have V. 9. In the 10 wherein is my Text, he musters up six arguments or considerations by which they might be encouraged against persecutions.

The first he takes from the author of them the Devil, who is the constant enemy of man, and the author of all evill, and therefore they needed not be afraid since God was his opposite.

The second he takes from the nature of their afflictions, prison, not death.

Thirdly, he argues from the extent, that not all, but some should be imprisoned, behold the divell shall cast some of you into prison.

Fourthly, From the intent of Christ, in, and the event of them (Tryal) that ye may be tryed.

Fifthly, From their Durations, but for a little space, and ye shall have tribulation ten days.

Sixthly, From Christ's promise to constant faithfulness under them, in the words of my Text. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will, &c.* And that after generations might know that his Epistle was not written unto the Church of *Smyrna* alone, but to all that profess the name

The reward of the faithful.

of Christ : he closeth it with this, *be that hath ears to hear let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.* Who saith ? Christ, the Spirit; to whom ? to all the Churches to the end of the world, and therefore he adds a generall promise; he that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death.

Now the words that I have read unto you contain (briefly)

1. An exhortation, *Be thou faithfull unto death ;*
2. A promise on their performance, *And I will give thee a Crown of life.*

For the better knowledge of what we are to speak, let us here clear the words.

1. How this word faithfull is taken in Scripture.
2. What is meant by being so to Death.
3. Why Life eternal is called a Crown.

This word *Faithful* first is referred to God, and that imports God is true in that his word. Thus you have it in *1 Joh. 1.9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful, &c.*

2 Tim. 2.
13.

Secondly. That he is true and constant in keeping and performing his promise. If we believe not, yet he is faithfull, he cannot deny himself.

Thirdly, That he never faileth them that put their trust in him; thus *Peter*, Wherefore let them

them that suffer according to the will of God, ^{1 Pet. 4.}
commit the keeping of their souls to him, in ^{19.}
well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Or, Secondly, This word Faithful is referred
to Christ. Wherefore it behoved him in all
things to be made like unto his brethren, that
he might be a merciful, and faithful high Priest
in things pertaining to God to make re-
conciliation for the sins of the people.

Or, Thirdly, It is referred to Gods word. ^{Psal. 119.}
All thy commandments are faithful. And he ^{86.}
said unto me all these things are true, and ^{Rev. 22. 6.}
faithful. Or.

Fourthly, It is referred to Sun and Moon. ^{Psal. 89.}
It shall be established for ever as the Moon, and ^{37.}
as a faithful witness in Heaven; yet in none of
these senses is it taken in my Text, but as it is
referred to Man, and signifies firmness, certainty,
and constancy in the belief and confession of
the truth, and promises of Christ, without
doubt or wavering; and thus saith my Text,
Be thou faithful; Thou, whosoever thou be, of
whatsoever rank or condition, be thou faithful,
that is, even though thine enemies should
threaten, yea, and take away thy life, yet be
faithful, for though there be three sorts of
death, natural spiritual, and eternal, one is past
while thou art dead to sin, another thou canst
not die, for Christ hath promised the contrary,
It is onely the death of the Body, that is here
meant; and that is not to be feared; *fear not* ^{Luke 12.}
him, saith Christ, that *can kill the body.* ^{4.}

Life is called a Crown.

First. To shew that the Saints who lay down their lives for Christ shall not lose them, but exchange them for better.

Secondly. It is called a Crown because their glory, and Joy shall alwayes be in vigor, and the spring. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown but we an incorruptible.

1 Cor. 9.
25.

Or, Thirdly Because Crowns and garlands were wont to be given in signe of victory, so life eternal to those who are faithfull to the Death. Or,

Fourthly, Because nothing more glorious, nothing more pretious than a Crown, being of pure Gold, set and indented with precious stones, so of all things the life of glory is most precious, but of this afterwards.

The words thus opened, before we lay down our Observations, let us take a view of the whole, which we may take to be, as if the Son of God, by his servant *John* had said, Ye Church of *Smyrna*, Ministers, and people, ye acknowledge me to be true God, you doe well, for I was from all eternity; you confesse me the true Messiah that came to seek, and save; I was dead, and am alive, I dyed for their sins, and arose for their justification. *Smyrna* I know thee well, I am Omniscient, thou art always in my sight, and so are thine enemies too, that seek to draw thee from the faith, yet though thou hast the devil to wrestle with, the Prison to

to be cast in, yea though thy life be brought on the stage, fear not, but be faithful ; go on happily, as thou hast begun, and for thy encouragement know, that thou shalt not want a reward. *I will give thee a Crown of Life.* Hence observe :

That those who profess Christianity, and confess the truth, must persevere unto the end, or be constant.

That those that are faithful to death shall receive from Christ *a Crown of Life.*

That those who profess Christianity and confess the truth, must Persevere to the end, is clear ; not only from my Text, *Be thou faithful unto death*, but elsewhere, so run (saith the Apostle) that ye may obtain. Look upon the beginning of the verse, and take it with you ; know ye not, that they that run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize, so run &c. which is as much indeed as if the Apostle had said, it will not be enough that ye strip your selves, and enter the list of your Christian race : Nay, nor will it be enough, if you run too, but if ye would have the prize, ye must take all advantages that may help you first to the end of your course ; what greater argument for fidelity, and perseverance ? *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy Crown from thee.* That is, persevere, be faithful, be constant to the end in that doctrine thou hast received and heard, lest being possessed with others that are false, thou lose heaven, and happiness. To be brief, *Noah* is chronicled

1 Cor. 9.
24.

Heb. 10.
23.

Rev. 3. 11.

- Gen. 6. 9. nished for his fidelity, how comes *Abraham* to have those Elogies in Scripture, That in him all the Nations of the earth should be blessed, that Christ came of his seed, that his bosom is a receptacle of the glorified, that the faithfull are said to be his sons; but by this, that he believed, and continued in that belief and it was accounted to him for Righteousness. Why is *Joseph* so commended, but because *Potiphar's* wives promises, proffers, and allurements did not crack his credit and fidelity with his maker? how can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? that is, I cannot do it, unless I break faith with my best friend; what makes *Moses* so renowned, even from the mouth of Christ? ye have *Moses* and the prophets; but that he was faithful, and constant; he refused to sacrifice in *Egypt*, or to leave an hoof behind. And because he preferred the afflictions of the people of God, before the pleasures of sin for a season, the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of *Egypt*? How comes *David* to be called *a man after Gods own heart*, the sweet Psalmist or singer of *Israel*, but for his constancy, fidelity in his youth? when he was but a boy, before the name of God be blasphemed, he'l through himself into the hands of a monster, and when he is come to more years, and experience, hear himself: The proud have had me greatly in derision, yet have I not declined from thy Law. Why was *Nehemiah* and *Mordecai* honoured of God, but because the one built his
- Rom. 4. 13.
- Gen. 39. 8, 9.
- Exod. 8. 26.
- Exod. 10. 26.
- 1 Sam. 17. 32.
- Psal. 119. 31.
- Neh. 4 21.

his Temple, the other revered not *Haman* Esth. 3. 2.
 who resolved to make havock of the *Jews*?
 Why are the three children mentioned in *Daniel*,
 to Gods glory, and their everlasting honour,
 but because they were faithfull, they obeyed
 God rather than man, and would venture their
 bodies with the extraordinary fire, rather than
 bow one knee to the golden Image? What
 need I add examples? if we may believe
 Ecclesiastical history, and Scripture, may not
Isaiabs Saw, *Daniels* Den, *John Baptists* head in
 a Charger, *Stephens* bruised body, the Penman of
 our Text, his boyling Caldron of lead, the
 blood of Martyrs ancient and modern. Prove
 the truth of this, That those that profess Chri-
 stianity must be constant to the end? because,

First, Without fidelity, and constancy we can
 never attaine to our wished end; so much we Matth. 24.
 may gather from that saying of our Saviour, but 13.
 he that shall endure to the end the same shall
 be saved. Whence by the rule of contraries
 I gather, that he that endureth not, cannot.
 Had *Lot's* wife gone straight forward with her Gen. 19.
 husband, she might have escaped the Judgment 26.
 of God, but looking back, is made a pillar of
 Salt. Had the confident young man obeyd Luke 18.
 Christ (Sell all that thou hast, and give to the 22.
 Poor, and thou shalt have treasures in Heaven)
 and gone on as he said he had begun, he would
 not have gone away sorrowfull. Had the Matth. 25.
 foolish Virgins kept Oyl in their Lamps till 10.
 the Bridegroom came, they had not been shut
 out from the wedding: what made Christ utter
 that

Matth. 13. that Parable concerning the seed ? but to shew that flathes of religion, & snatches at Christ, will not serve the turn ; whileas they hugg their sins, with the other hand as their bosom-friends.

Heb. 11. 6. Secondly , without fidelity, and constancy, thou canst not please God ; what canst thou expect when thou goest to God, halting between two ? if thou resolvest not to close with him, thy prayers are odious, thy good deeds, and best actions sin, he cannot away with them ; 'tis like thou thinkest if thou leavest thy heart in the devils hands, and go to God with a spell, thou mayest perchance have a return, but Saint *James* tells thee the contrary. Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord ; the reason followeth, because he asketh not in faith, but doubteth.

Jam. 1. 7.

Thirdly, Reason and equity prompts us to fidelity, we have a *proverb* among us (though favouring nothing of God) *Fallere fallentem non est fraus.*

From whence by the rule of contraries I reason thus, if it be no deceit to deceive the deceiver, which I know to be false, then it is deceit, and that great too, to deceive them that never deceiv'd us ; who are they among us that can, or dare stand up, and say God hath been worse than his word to them, and therefore they reject him ; I think there is none. Have we not life, breath, moving, and being from him ? doth he not protect, and defend us from infinite accidents, and injuries ? might he not have expelled

us

us in the *Embrio*, or smothered us ere we came to the birth, made us monsters, or infected us, with some loathsome disease? yet none of all these hath he done, but made us wonderfully, and redeemed us graciously.

But now I think by this time (speaking so *Object.* much of fidelity and constancy) some napping souls begin to look about them, and cry out, to whom, and wherein would ye have us faithful? To the first I answer.

1. *To God.*

Answer.

2. *To others.*

3. *To your own souls.*

To God First. In performing your promises, and vowes made in baptism, in time of distress inward or outward; when we are sick doe we not say, if God will restore us to our wonted health, we would be new men? when we are in want, if he increase our store, we should acknowledge him by shewing mercy to the poor; when we have any conflict in soul; are we not ready to say, O my God, my Christ, my Redeemer, I will slight all the riches, pleasures and delights in the world for one glimpse of thy blessed countenance, one beam of the Sun of righteousness, one secret whisper from thy holy Spirit to dispell those clouds, remove those temptations, and heale my soul? But how these are performed; our own Consciences

Psal. 78.

34.

can best inform; onely take from me what *David* saith, When he slew them then they sought him, and enquired early after God, and they remembred that God was their rock, and the most high their redeemer, nevertheless they did but flatter him with their mouths, and lyed unto him with their tongues, for their heart was not right.

Secondly, We must be faithfull to him in his worship, neither adoring the unknown God, not serving the true after a false manner or for a wrong end, we must not seem religious for fashion, ostentation or gain (as I am afraid too many do) but with sincerity, and holy zeal performing our devotion, looking to him, who is invisible, not for a house full of worldly goods, but a heart full of heavenly grace.

Thirdly, ye must be faithfull to him by endeavouring, what in you lyes, to promote in others his, and his Churches interest: it was *Dauids* resolution, when he said, Come, and see what the Lord hath done to my soul; and *Christs* advice to *Peter*, when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren. But now the case is altered, and *Dauids* practice, and *Christs* precept laid aside; he thinks himself the onely religious man, that is like the fire brands betwixt *Samsons* foxes tails, making the members of the Church turn back to back, and say stand back, I am holier than thou; this cannot chuse but make the Churches heart bleed to see her self slighted under pretence of faithfullness, and pure love;
for

for the Israelites halting between two, and the Laodiceans lukewarmness; the Epicures soule take thine ease, and the Pharisees long prayers are alike culpable; he then that will be faithfull to God must pay his vowes, and not onely worship aright himself, but desire that others may doe so too.

Secondly, As we must be so to him, so to others; that is, we must behave our selves so in our particular callings; as that we may be beneficial to the publick; the Judge must judge righteously, the Lawyer plead faithfully, the Minister preach impartially, neither sowing pillows under mens arms, nor breaking bruised reeds, but saying to the righteous, *It shall be well with you.*

In summe all ranks noble, and ignoble, from the crown to the Cottage, must contribute to one anothers good.

Now as ye must be faithfull to God, and faithfull to others, so must you be, to your own souls; by resorting to the waters, to buy wine, and milk for them, that is, by prayers, and true repentance seek for those graces of Gods spirit, which are as necessary for your nourishment as common milk for your body; she would be thought a hard-hearted mother, that would expose the fruit of her womb to pining, or put it to a cruel nurse, that would deny it sustenance, let us not come under this censure, since God hath given an immortall soul that must be nourished, let us use all means for its nourishment, to have it fatt and flourishing.

Isa. 51.

Secondly,

The reward of the faithful.

2ly, Be faithful unto them, by letting them see with their own eyes, for they perceive but dimly, (the visive faculty being obscured by sin) that they are more capacious than to be filled with a thousand worlds full, either of riches, honours, pleasures, or preferments, there can be no true satisfaction for them, but in him who is Lord of all ; let them therefore, I say, have their libertie, go not over their bellies, but follow, and assist them in that, which in some measure they naturally desire.

Thirdly, Ye must be faithful to them, in not bringing them into those enormities and Premunuries, that will undoubtedly damn them, especially those of security, and presumption ; say not with the rich man, that thou hast enough laid up for many years, nor with those wretches that say though we add drunkenness to thirst, yet we shall have peace ; but be ingenious, tell them, that by reason of the bodies leprosie, they must goe to a physician ; they are out of Joynt, they must go to a Bone-setter ; they are Plethorick, and must use Phlebotomy ; hungry, and must be fed ; naked, and must be cloathed ; blind, and must have eye-salve ; poor, and must have gold ; and all these must be had by professing, and that constantly, and to death, the Doctrine of a slain Christ.

Application.

Ought all they that profess Christianity, to be constant, and persevere to the end? Then, Man, whosoever thou art, that art tossed up and down with every wind of Doctrine, look to thy self, thy condition is deplorable; there is a promise made in my Text, but not to thee; Christ hath shed his Blood to wash constant Professors, but not one drop of it for thee, as long as thou art in this wavering condition: And therefore if thou desirest Heaven, a Crown of life, be faithful to death.

Again, Ought all that profess Christianity to be constant? Then let me exhort you that call God Father, Christ Redeemer, and Holy Ghost Sanctifier, to continue your course, and not fall back.

For pressing this a little nearer, I shall lay down some Arguments to perswade you to this duty.

Secondly, Directions to help you in it.

First, Constancy and Perseverance makes us like Christ: For he though carried to a Wilderness, to a high Mountain, to a pinnacle of the Temple by the Devil; though reviled, opposed, and at last crucified, by the bloody and cruel Jews, shrunk not in the least from his everlasting determination, till that joyful word was uttered, *Consummatum est*: And if we would be like him, we must do so too.

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Secondly,

The reward of the faithful.

Secondly, Our constancy will weaken the force of our Enemy. *Resist the Devil, saith James, and he will flee from you. Quanto nos constantius & fortius steterimus, saith Origen, Hom. 4. super Exod. Cap. 6. tanto infirmior, & invalidior erit Pharaoh.* The more strongly and constantly we stand, the more weak is Pharaoh; but if we begin once to be weak and doubtful, the more strong and powerful will the Devil be against us, and he goes on. That is truly fulfilled in us, which Moses gave in figure, when he lifted up his hands, Israel prevailed; when he was weary, and let them down, Amalek prevailed. So then let us lift up our hands in the strength of a crucified Christ, that he may increase our faith.

Thirdly, Without constancy, 'tis impossible to get that we desire. *Quid prodest, obsecra, saith Cyril in Job. lib. 6. cap. 1.* What doth it profit, I pray, if after a hard conflict we fall to our Enemy? What if we carry a Ship safe into the Indies, and suffer shipwreck before we return? What if we begin to build a House, and never finish it? Eternal life is promised to none but to those that begin and end well. Remember Lot's Wife, who was turned to a pillar of Salt; none that puts his hand to the plow must look back: Flatter not your selves therefore, adds he, because ye hear, and receive my Words, this is the beginning of Salvation; but unless ye abide in my Word, it will not be of any use to you. Now if ye would be

like Christ, if ye would overcome your Enemies, and obtain what you desire, take these Directions :

First, Be diligent in the use of the Means, hearing of the Word, which begetteth Faith, and Faith constancy in Prayer, which joyneth thee and Christ together, bringeth down his strength from Heaven, in which thou maist stand ; receive the Sacraments, which are signs of his Love, which will prove in all thy conflicts health to the Soul, and marrow to the Bones : But if we neglect these or any of them, we may be sure that that cloud will soon bring on us a shewr of sin.

Secondly, If thou perceivest any spiritual weakness, if thou seest any appearance of breach in the walls of thy Soul, run to thy Captain, Jesus Christ, for new supplies of his divine Grace, and strive to make thy passage sure by fervent supplication, and deep humiliation.

Thirdly, If thou wouldst be constant, shun all occasions of turning back, hypocrisie, self-love, spiritual pride, evil company, false Prophets : In sum, shun all appearance of evil ; if the strange woman entice thee, consent thou not, for she seeks to lull thee asleep in her arms, till a dart strikes through thy Liver.

Fourthly, If thou wouldst be constant, let Heaven and Happiness be the mark thou aimest at. And for this end consider and imitate their ways, who now are safely at the end of their Journey, and enjoy all that they had in promise.

The reward of the faithful.

mise. *Joseph's Chastity, Moses's Zeal, David's Arithmetick, Solomon's Wisdom*, in perceiving the vanity of all things, yea Christ and his Apostles, and all the Confessors and Martyrs ever since, preach nothing to us more frequently than constancy and perseverance, and this was not by them, nor will be performed by us in vain; for my Text saith, *Those that are faithful unto death, shall get from Christ a Crown of Life.*

Though Man be the best of sublunary Creatures, and therefore hath most reason to serve God, and yield obedience to his Commands, yet wickedness in the worst breeds antipathy, and weakness in the best, inability to that which is good; corruption is so strong in the first, that they will not receive, and so tenacious and remanent in these, that they can hardly retain truth in their minds, or grace in their hearts. Therefore that God may be like himself, merciful and gracious, he hath been pleased by his sacred Amanuenses, not only to enjoin obedience, but promise rewards. And amongst those many chronicled in holy Writ, none more effectual, than that which concerns our selves, there being in us such a principle of self-love, as puts us on seeking our own advantage; and of all those which allure to the doing of duty, none equal to that Crown of Life which is promised to and laid up for us. Hard tasks have great encouragements, annexed by the wise disposer of all things; as here, nothing more hard

hard to flesh and blood than constancy, in the midst of furious threats, bitter banishments, and cruel deaths : The requital therefore is correspondent ; that which is most loved, Life ; that that is most desired, a happy end, and both here together, *I will give thee a Crown of Life* ; in which take notice of

1. *The Benefit, The Crown of Life.*
2. *The Demise, 'Tis given.*
3. *The Giver, I.*
4. *The Receiver, Thee, that is, every faithful Soul.*

Though the benefit be the last in the words, yet will we begin with it. 'Tis not bare Life, though that were sufficient being in Heaven ; but 'tis a Crown of Life, and this, that happy and glorious estate, reserved for pure and refined Souls in the other World. Life then it is called for its great worth ; *Nil vita dulcius*, is the language of universal Nature. And as it is most valuable, so valued ; honour, riches, pleasure, learning, all will be resigned for it ; witness the Devil's expression, a truth from the father of lyes, *Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life* : And Esau's Expostulation, *And Esau said, Behold I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birth-right do to me ?* Life is desirable then, and here it is, an honourable, healthy, and happy one, a Crown. Though the expression be meta-

phorical, (and alluding to warlike affairs, as fighting, running, and wrestling, where the actors after their conquests were crowned with garlands, as a badge of honour and victory) yet because such suit best with our darkned intellectuals, till death shall amplifie our science, and make those truths obvious and cognoscible, which while we are at such a distance from Heaven, we can neither satisfactorily behold, nor fully expresse ; we will therefore follow our Metaphor, and yet behold no other lines in the face of this life, but such as are drawn by the Spirit of God in his own Book. Crowns (then you know) are the greatest tokens of power, majesty and honour, being the Characteristicks of God's Vicegerents upon Earth. This the Kingly Prophet himself reckoneth

Pfal. 21. 3. among his blessings ; For thou preventest him with the blessing of goodnesse, and settest a Crown of pure gold upon his head : So Heaven, or this Crown of Life, is the bright seat, and perfect consummation, of all the joys, honours, and pleasures, of those that are washed in the Blood of the Son of God, and made Kings and Priests to himself.

Again, Crowns beside their golden worth, have additional gems to make them more precious. Well then may Heaven's blifs be called so, since it hath so many Jewels beyond all humane estimation, and those either external, accrewing to the Body, or internal, to both Body and Soul, in that celestial Habitable of God,
and

and themselves : The first is spirituality ; that corporeal species which most resembles Spirits, is the more nobly to be esteemed ; but in Heaven we shall not only be *ἰστέγγελοι*, as you have it, *Mat. 22. 30.* but *Phil. 3. 21.* *Our vile bodies shall be changed, and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious Body.* Gross matter hath many faces, Bodies many defects, while Earth is predominant, which Heaven like a rare Chymist either abstracts or transmutes ; *revirescent omnia* ; no heart-pantings , no head-achings, gray hairs, or wrinkled faces, trembling hands, or feeble legs, hollow eyes, nor toothless jaws ; but on the contrary, health without sickness, youth without age, beauty without deformity, strength without weakness, and clearness of sight, never to admit dimness.

Again, As we shall be spiritualized, so clarified. Then shall we not need the Philosopher's Window to discover our endless clarity, but shall be seen as we are, and see as we are seen ; *1 Cor. 13.* no veiled face, nor hoodwinked understanding *12.* in Heaven, for all, the very refuse part of man, (the Body I mean) shall shine as the Sun : And if that be too little, if you will believe *St. Austin*, *Hujus corporis claritas tantum Solem excellit, quantum Sol in claritate nostrum corpus præcellit* : That is, The brightness of a glorified body doth as far excel the Sun, as the Sun doth our mortal body. To this we may add, agility correspondent to our Angel-like Natures, which, as one saith, shall be such, as *Ubi vult animus ibi protinus erit & corpus.*

Lastly, Immortality. He that wisheth to live for ever, now hath his desire. Our Grandfather *Adam* could never boast of this privilege; for though he had *Posse non mori*, a possibility of not dying, yet had he not (though in Paradise) *Non posse mori*, an absolute immunity from death: *Reservatur hoc pro patria*, Heaven alone must immortalize us, then our mortal must put on immortality, dying once we die no more, the line of our life shall run to eternity; O glorious Crown!

Is this all? No: These are but the crystal cases of the more beloved pictures; the Soul's glories must now be displayed; *Knowledge is sweet to the Soul*, saith the Son of Wisdom; and here it shall be in the highest degree. As

First, That Knowledge, surpassing Knowledge of God, and those intricacies, dark and obscure, scarce cognoscible to the Sophies of the World, shall then be *Via Regia*: We shall with *Moses* have our faces unveiled, when we come to this holy Hill; there we may behold with open face, and have the full knowledge of the beatifick Vision; then the Mystery of the Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, which the most sagacious and quick-sighted mortals have lost themselves in, or at best but begged the question; the Hypostatical and Mystical Union of Divinity with Humanity, and all the other secrets of Heaven, concerning Creation and Providence, with the nature and order of the winged Heralds, shall be written plain upon all glorified

rified understandings. And as the Knowledge will be great, so the Concord unutterable. Now no more desertions on God's part, no frown, no threat, no grief, nor complaint, but all complacency, and never-fading love. *Him that overcometh, will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.* Then on our part: No more resisting of the Spirit, remissness in duty, no lusting of the Flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, but is all swallowed up in perfect obedience. Now, and not till now, is that blessed Contract; *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea I will betroth thee unto me in knowledge, righteousness and judgement, and in loving kindness, and in mercy.* This Contract, I say, is consummate by such an indissoluble knot, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate from the fore-mentioned Bliss. But to sum up this, I have rather detracted from, than enhanced its worth, the tongues of men being not able to utter, what Angels do but pry into. I only add that joy and pleasure the royal Prophet speaketh of, *Psalm 16. 12* which is at God's right hand. *Abraham* rejoiced to see Christ's Day afar off. *John Baptist* sprung in his Mother's womb at the approach of his Saviour, yet unborn. *Old Simeon*, that he had him in his arms, though in his humble and self-abasing estate: How much more

Rev. 3. 12.

Hos. 2. 19.

more reason shall the faithful have to rejoyce to see him, not only sit on his Father's right hand, but to sit down with him? And though I dare not with the Schoolmen, appropriate particular Glories to every sense; as that Heaven, or this Crown of Life, shall be to sight as a most clear glass, wherein it shall see him who is (to mortal eyes) invisible; a harp to the hearing, for those melodious sounds of heavenly Hallelujahs, that shall be there sung without intermission; as honey to the taste, in respect of the tree of life, that groweth in the midst of the Paradise of God, and the River, that proceedeth from under his Throne; as the most odoriferous spices to the smelling, for there is the Lamb, whose garments are all sweet smelling myrrh; as roses to our handling, seeing nothing is there defiled, or impure: Yet may I avouch, That when we see God face to face, we shall be so taken up with the contemplation and fruition of that glorious Object, (in whose infinity all goods are included and dilated) as numberless ages, which the joy of the beatifick Vision abounds with, will scarce afford us leisure for a diversion to any other pleasures, than those it self creates, which are so numerous and entire, that we shall there desire nothing that we have not, unless it be more tongues to sing more praises, or at least a capacity, to pay him greater thanks for what we have. If this be not enough; Is there joy in the sight and knowledge of friends? Here it shall be, if the general consent of the
An-

Ancients be valid. Is there joy in the likeness of those that are above us? Then here it is, we shall be like the Angels in Heaven. Is there joy in conversing with them? Surely this we shall have, since both they and we shall behold the divine Majesty. I might run on in this stream, till I were breathless, and yet, like one of the Queen of *Sheba's* Informers, not tell the half of that which every faithful Soul shall find. And therefore thinking meditation and wonder to be the best Rhetorick for this Theam, I shall sum this Branch up with St. *Austin*, who saith, There the wisdom of *Solomon* shall be counted folly; the beauty of *Abolom* deformity; the swiftness of *Hazael* slowness; the strength of *Sampson* weakness; the long life of *Methuselah* mortality; *Cræsus*, *Alexander*, and *Cæsar*, their pomps, riches, and glorious Kingdoms, beggary; the things that God hath promised, and are to be had, not only transcend desire but wishes. And this for the Benefit, *The Crown of Life*.

Come I now to the *Demise*, where it is not said, And thou shalt merit, but *I will give thee the Crown of Life*.

If we expect any thing from God as due, we must acknowledge, that if his promise did not, our actions could not, make it so, and that to his Mercy we owe the right we have to confide in his Justice. St. *Paul*, who ha- 1 Tim. 4. 8
ving

Eph. 2. 8.

2 Pct. 1. 4.

Rom. 6. 23.

ving fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith, expected a Crown of Righteousness from the Lord, under the notion of a righteous Judge; yet tells us, That by grace we are saved, through faith, and not of our selves, it is the gift of God, whose promises, now they are made ours, allow us indeed to expect Heaven from his Justice; but the making of those great and precious promises, (for so St. Peter calls them) must be acknowledged the pure effect of his free and undeserved goodness, which to believe infinite, we need but consider the disproportion betwixt such a recompence, as eternal glory, and the least imperfect performances of ours, which, though they needed not pardon, could not at least challenge any reward from him, who is our Creator, and hath such a right to exact of us what service he pleaseth, without proposing any recompence, and that our exactest obedience to all his commands, would yet leave us to confess our selves unprofitable servants. What more express than? *The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*: Here St. Paul inverteth the Antithesis, having said immediately before, That *the wages of sin is death*; but now that eternal life is not the wages of righteousness, but the gift of God; where it seems, of set purpose, he opposeth grace to wages, to shew that it is a thing so excellent, that unless it be given by God, it cannot be gotten by our own works. Take Christ's
own

own word for all ; *Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you a Kingdom.* How sweetly the Fathers have expressed this Truth, hear St. *Austin*, *Si homo mille annis serviret Deo ferventissime non mereretur ex condigno dimidium diei esse in regno cælorum.* St. *Austin ad Laurent.* A stipend, saith he, is payed in warfare as a debt, and not given as a gift ; therefore St. *Paul* saith, the stipend of sin is death, to declare, that death is rendred unto sin, not without desert, but as due ; but grace unless it be free is not grace : Wherefore as touching the good works of man, forasmuch as they are the gifts of God, in that unto them eternal life is rendred, it is grace for grace : By this, and other of his expressions, as that in his 9th Chap. *de gratia, & libero Arb.* and in his 13th Chap. *de corruptione, & gratia*, he gathers, that eternal life is therefore called grace, because the works which go before it are given freely. St. *Hilary* on *Psal.* 50. thus, My hope is in the mercy of God for ever and ever ; for the works of righteousness are not sufficient unto the merit of perfect blessedness. And *Jerom.* on *Isa.* 46. If we should consider our own merits, we should despair. In sum, My Text saith, *It is given.* Now if any yet will stick for merit, let him work that God hath neither given him power, nor will to do, what he is not bound to do ; that, that he may be profitable to him, from whom he expects recompence, and equal to the reward which he looks for ; otherwise
let

Cap. 107.

The reward of the faithful.

let him be faithful unto death, that he may receive *gratis*, *A Crown of Life*.

About the third, *The Donor*, I need not stand long, seeing 'tis Christ the Righteous, who cannot deceive; the Holy One of God, that cannot lye; the Advocate that pleads for our admission unto Heaven, and hath a three-fold Office of Prophet, Priest and King. The first to reveal to; the second to obtain for; the third to confer on, faithful ones a Crown of Life; which is the last, The persons gifted, *Thee*.

First, The Church of *Smyrna*; and with them all that hunger and thirst after righteousness; meditate on God's Law; weep when others do not keep it; long for Heaven, and persevere to the end; running, fighting, wrestling; finishing their course; working out their Salvation with fear and trembling; or in the words of my Text, such as are faithful unto death, to them *Christ will give a Crown of Life*.

And now to Apply. Is there a Crown of Life promised? Why do we not believe it? If we believe it, why do we not prize it? If we prize it, why do we not seek after it? It were not possible we could be so much in love with this Life, if we did believe there were another; nor would we dote so on these fading
plea-

The reward of the faithful.

III

pleasures, and poor clay Cottages; if we believed there were Kingdoms and Crowns prepared for us. This Life we live is always provided for, as if it should never end; the other as if it should never begin; while as that shall end, this never. We see, saith St. *Austin*, that the lovers of this present Life, use their utmost care and cost to preserve it, and all they can do, is only *ut differrent, non auferent mortem*; and if men are solicitous *ut aliquantum plus vivatur, quomodo agendum est ut semper vivatur*?

Again, Will Christ give a Crown of Life to the faithful? Then let the memory of the promised reward keep us constant in our duty. True fidelity or perseverance is hardly obtained; but it is as true, that a Crown of Life is as advantageous. *Videamus*, saith St. *Austin*, *quid promissu*; and as I began, not Silver, Gold Houses, Lands, or earthly Possessions; and yet what will not men do that they may gain such? And shall not a Crown of Life have stronger influence? Let us consider on the one hand, what we can probably gain, by being unfaithful, by falling away, and forsaking the Truth? It may be riches, honour, favour; but Christ being Judge, *What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole World, and lose his Soul?* Mat. 16.26 Again, Consider what we lose, if we adhere to, and persevere in it? It may be Houses, Lands, Father, Mother, Wife, Children; but a Crown of Life will make amends for all. Let us therefore imitate the Husbandman, whose toyl is sweetened

The reward of the faithful.

ned with the hopes of a plentiful Harvest ; the Merchant, that flights the roughest Seas, and most dangerous Rocks, having an eye to the *Indian Pearl*. So I say, Let us encourage our selves in the midst of difficulties, with the serious thoughts of a Crown, and if we hold out to the end, we shall have Life that shall never end. *Be thou faithful, &c. Amen.*

Jesus



JESUS

THE

DESIRED OBJECT.

The Fifth Sermon.

John 12. 21.

Sir, we would see Jesus.

I Need not stand to preface, or demand your devout attention: since the very words of my Text bring to your view that only Loadstone, by and to which all Christian Souls ought to be attracted. Unusual Comets have their Admirers, the smallest things
I that

come to pass when the cause is not known wanteth not remembrancers; and what fame hath proclaimed rare (though really it be not so) hath it's beholding profelytes both far and near; and shall not then that prodigie of love, worth, humility and humanity; God incarnate, or the man (rather God, and man) Christ Jesus draw our eyes to see, and our hearts to desire, and long after him? seeing our Jesus then as he is, or at least ought to be the end of mans desires, so the words of my Text. Sir, wee would see Jesus. Who are these desire to see Jesus? is it the high Priest? no; is it the Scribes and Pharisees? no: were they in summe his own countrey men, and peculiar people the Jews? no. Who then? they were Greeks, strangers, or at best but some of those. *Qui stabant in atrio gentium*, they desire to see him; but why now more than at another time? because his last miracle was fresh in their ears, and before their eyes. The raising of dead stinking *Lazarus*, as you may read Ch. 11. I shall not insist to discuss whether these Greeks came out of curiosity: but in charity shall take these words as if they had said Sir no doubt your Master Jesus, whom we are willing to adore, is the promised *Messiah*, for these mighty works can be done by none other, we pray you therefore since we are not admitted as yet to come nearer, but stand afar off, shew us, for we would willingly see him. Whence observe.

That

Jesus the desired Object.

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*That they are not alwayes the best professors
that make the greatest show.*

This is clear from the Text. Though the Jews made greatest preparations for, and kept the feast, yet none we hear of, that seek to see Jesus; but onely these Greek profelytes: the *Pharisee* and the *Publican* came to the Temple, the one standing on his vindication; the other acknowledging self-guiltiness; he with a great show, and many words; the other like himself; humble, and self accusing; but which is the better? consult the Text verse 14. I tell you that this man went away justified rather than the other. Nay Christs own words are expresse. Verily I say unto you that the *Publicans*, and *Harlots* shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you; that is, Gods mercy is at hand if they repent, and a repenting *Harlot* is better than a professing *Hypocrite*: It is not every one that saith, Lord, Lord: nor those that say we have prophesied in thy name, but such as do the will of the father, visit the sick, feed the hungry, and cloath the naked; there were ten *Lepers* cleansed, Nine Jews, and one *Samaritan*; they no doubt made shew of Religion, and loved their country men, but he was hated of them mortally, yet see the end, None gives thanks but this stranger; they all received the same mercy, yet all had not the same heart. Verse 18.

Aretius compares them fitly to an ingratefull man who while he is in misery will crouch but as soon as he is recovered will prove the same as before, those that profess most, have com-

monly some by end: if we speak of the Jews,
 they pretended a carnal priviledge, *We be*
 Luk. 8. 33. *Abrahams seed*, we were never in bond-
 Rom. 9. 6. age. But hear what Saint *Paul* saith. For
 they are not all Israel, that are of Israel. If
 we speak of the Gentiles, then shall we find that
 Hypocrisie and presumption are the two Master-
 wheels of their devotion; They are for doing
 Mat. 6. 5. all for ostentation; that they may be seen
 of men; whom Christ taxeth. These
 thinking that if they once but see Christ in his
 ordinances reigning, and trampling all powers
 under his feet, that then they may lay hold of
 him there, never once considering that undoubted
 Acl. 14. 22. truth, that they that would wear a crown of
 glory, must first bear a cross of afflictions, for the
 Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and they
 take it by force.

Let us now make what hath been said, our
 own, thus, are they not always the best Christians
 that make the greatest shew? then what art thou
 O man, that hast neither the shew nor power
 of Religion. I know thou wilt say I am a man;
 and an honest man; the world cannot lay
 any thing to thy charge: 'tis true thou art a man
 but a deformed one, were thy body like Ab-
 25. m. 14. soloms, that from the sole of thy feet to the
 crown of thy head, there were no blemish, yet
 thou hast a loathsome, and foul soul within,
 thy whole head is sick, and thy whole heart
 faint. Thy soule with all his affections, that
 ought to be splendid, and glorious being the
 Image

Image of the invisible Deity is blacker than a cole. Look on thy heart, and consider what use it was made for, was it not to be the Spirits receptacle, is He there thinkest thou? no, no, God is not in all his thoughts, nay he cannot be there; for there is no concord betwixt Christ and *Belial*; what then? a den of thieves the devil with his blackest machinations, and this thou mayst see, if thou look but on its faculties; thy will, was it not given thee for this end, that it might run in a straight line with Gods commandements? but alas! see how it is degenerate from its first constitution; and rectitude; and hath found out to it self many inventions, that there is no place left for Gods Precepts: look on thy affections, were they not ordained to dart themselves out with direct beams towards their Creator, and be fully satiate with and wholly absorpt in him? but see how farr it is otherways; they never cast a glance at Heaven, unless it be over the shoulder, nor will not do as long as there is a lying, and murdering Devil ready, to gloss the world so, or at least to shew it so by a false Optick, as if Heaven could neither match it in beauty, profit, or pleasure. Behold thy Memory, & hadst thou not it to remember Gods goodness, and thy own duty? that in thy wonderful making and preservation; this to teach thee on whom thou dependest, and set all the rest at work to be thankfull, but how farr it deviates experience tells us, for unless the pins of thy clay Tabernacle shake, or the painted

devils of lust, and pleasure fail thee, thou never thinkest of any supreme power, and as for thy self, that is utterly forgotten: *David's* shaping in iniquity, and conceiving in sin, are quite cancelled, thy obscene formation, and loathsome birth, sweating, and wrinkle-browed life, are buried in oblivion; thou remembrest nothing but *Chimæra's*, as that thou art hewn out of rocks of Diamonds, and canst be subject to no corruption, but being inveloped with this natural Canopy of Heaven, and placed in a Paradise of Earth, as thou supposedst it to be, thou shalt eternize thy feigned worth. But look to thy self in time: *Abolom's* fair Face was hanged in an Oak; and *Alexander*, the World's beloved, gave his Body to Worms. In short, Hadst thou all the Accomplishments the Devil can promise, the World, and thy own Flesh afford, and wantest Religion, the true fear of God, and a due esteem of thine own Soul, thou art the loathsome of all creatures, an everlasting enemy to God, and prisoner to the Devil. Get holiness then, and thou shalt have all thou thinkest thou hast.

Secondly, *Are they not the best Professors that make the greatest show?* Then Hypocrite come thou upon the stage, and hear thy doom. Counterfeit holiness is a double ungodliness; if it be a good thing to be good indeed, then what reason hast thou to appear to be what thou wouldst not? And if it be an evil thing to be evil, why wilt thou be that thou wouldst not seem

seem to be? Thou art fitly compared to a Peach, that hath a soft outside, but a rugged stone within; thou maist easily deceive thy self and others, but God thou canst not deceive; nay, as long as thou goest no further than leaves, thou art worse than the other, I mean, him that professeth nothing. Because

First, Thou sinnest against thy own Conscience, knowing that the sound of thy long prayers, will but lull the widow asleep, till thou hast devoured her house; and so while thou dost thus, thou mak'st thy self incapable of receiving those graces, that indeed thou never expectest.

Secondly, Thou art worse than the other, because thou carriest it so with men, that they think thou art as good as the best, and so keep'st thy self from those pinching reproofs, and piercing admonitions, that are the ordinary means used by the Almighty for converting of open sinners.

Thirdly, Thou eatest thy own back of all burdens, and casts them on others. See the story of the *Pharisee* and *Publican* afore-cited. But what gainest thou by all this?

Hear; First, Thou clapp'st thy head on the pillow of security, crowning it with these formal Laurels, and so sleepest till it be surrounded with everlasting flames. This was the foolish Virgins case, They had lamps, but not oyl; Mat. 25. 3. and see what follows, They were not suffered to enter in with the Bridegroom.

Secondly, By this thou gatherest all thy Forces, to oppose sincerity in others as well as thy self. Thus did the *Pharisees* when they came to Christ, tempting him; and the language of their hearts no doubt was this, What? can the Carpenter's Son have more sincerity than we? Whence hath he these things?

Thirdly, Thou gainest a gall'd Conscience, canst not hear of thy faults; if the Messenger of God reproves thee, thou spurnest, Am not I holier than he? and so contemnest both his person and message. Thus you see the ill of it.

Now let me enter into thy bosome, to shew thee there, that thou knowest too well already, viz. the Causes of Hypocrisie, which if thou takest away it will cease, and thou then indeed wilt be what thou seemest. The first of which is,

That when thou comparest thy self, and thy outward shows with any, it is always with the worst. Lord, I am not like this man, though indeed if thou remembrest what hath been said, thou art a great deal worse; for he puts no impediment in the way of means, thou dost.

Secondly, The Calumnies that are laid on God's Children by the World, make thee thus temporize. They cannot run one hour to the Closet, and another to their lusts, honours, and preferments, witness *Daniel*; but thou with every wind and company canst change thy face and heart, and so gettest love of all; while as

Truth

Jesus the desired Object.

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Truth it self saith, *Wo unto you when all speak well of you, for so did your fathers to the false Prophets.* Luke 6.26.

Thirdly, Plenty and success in worldly matters. As long as I am thus and thus, saith the Hypocrite, I will not alter my Principles; I care not for that strictness that proposes banishment, imprisonment, an hungry belly, and a bare back, yea and sometimes fire and sword, surely God loves me more than these, else I should not have so great plenty; I can pray with a chearful and laughing countenance, if I will, (but my way bids me disfigure my face) while they have their cheeks blubbered with tears; I can fall down before the Image that *Nebuchadnezzar* sets up, and dine plentifully, while *Daniel* is confined to his Chamber, and dare not taste of the portion from the King's Table. It is true, all these thou canst do, all these thou dost; but behold the end, stollen waters are sweet, but afterwards bitter; thy portion is in thy hand; shews in promise: They are banished, 'tis true, but whither? Is it not from sinful and Soul-corrupting Earth, to the Empereal Heaven? They are hungry, and naked, but best fed, and cloathed, having the Flesh, and Blood; and righteous Robes of Christ, for their nourishment and cloathing: Thou say'st God loves thee, nay, but he rather hates, giving those things, as he did the Quails in the Wilderness, but with a severe curse: Thou canst feed heartily, while *Daniel* dare not touch;

touch ; but remember, that he escapes free, when his accusers are swallowed up by the hungry Lions.

A fourth Cause of Hypocrisie is stinting and straitning of God's Justice, and stretching of his Mercy beyond his Promises in Scripture. God is merciful, and gracious, long-suffering, and hath promised to receive, and accept of weak endeavours : Shall not I expect to be heard, that do pray three times a day, and that aloud too, that others may hear, and imitate, or else admire ? It is true, God is merciful, &c. but to whom ? Not to such hollow-hearted, and double-tongued wretches as thou art ; he hath promised to receive, and accept weak endeavours, but whose ? Not thine ; for thou endeavourest to make him such a one as thy self ; but of those that groan under the burden of their sins, and have their Consciences quick-sighted, to see the Judgement of God afar off. To these, and these only, is God merciful. But

Fifthly, The death of other men is a great cause, whence he saith, O what a dry-hearted man was this ? He could not utter one word at his death, while I could have winded my self with my expostulations into the arms of my Saviour, and bosome of *Abraham* ; sure I must do a great deal better than this man ; if he be saved, undoubtedly I must. Judge not, judge not, Hypocrite, for without repentance thou must be judged : What if he could not say

say a word, had he not a Soul as well as thou? Might not his better part be active while the other decayed? Are not sighs and groans more acceptable than much babling? Is it not the heart that God requires? It is like that as he sounded not a Trumpet when he gave his alms, nor spake aloud when he prayed, so he resolved with the like silence to receive his reward. Thou couldst have expostulated, and what then? Blown thy self into Hell with thine own breath, like those who shall receive a *Depart*, *Mat. 7. 22.* *I never knew you.* If he be saved, sure thou must; it follows not; the rich man in the Gospel was as confident, as he sat in state, and *Lazarus* on the dunghil; but how much he was deceived, you may read. Take warning then by others harms.

But now by this time you are perswaded these are the Causes. You may desire now to know more narrowly. As

First, By the Signs of it in general; and then in particular, whether you be so or no.

First then, If you would know an Hypocrite, 'tis he that sets more by the glory of the World, and esteem of men, than God's favour, and his regard of him. See for this a pregnant place; *Saul* being rejected of the Lord, verse 23. careth not so much for that, as that he should not be honoured before the people; *Yet honour me now*, as if he had said, Though I am forsaken of God, yet let not my people know so much: And this is the tune of every Hypocrite,

1 Sam. 15. 38.

crute, Though I know my service pleaseth not God, yet I am sure it pleaseth men, and that is all I desire.

Secondly, He is nice in small matters, but when he comes to the greater, he sticks not. A Papist will not eat flesh on Fridays, but thinks it no sin to break the Sabbath. The *Jews* will not put the price of Blood into the Treasury, yet will hire a Traitor to betray his Master. These are his general Marks; now if ye would know whether you be so or no, take these:

First, Do ye in all things seek to have the testimony of a good Conscience, and to please God? If so, then you are none.

Secondly, Are ye ready to submit to God's Will against reason with *Abraham*, and hate all sin as well in your selves as others?

Thirdly, Do you acknowledge your own unworthiness, that if ye have any good thing of God it is *gratis*?

Fourthly, Are ye confident in a good Cause, when your Conscience back't with God's Word, tells you that you are to do so, and so, will you do it? Laying aside all self-interest, do ye resolve to continue God's Servants without fainting, or wearying unto the end? If you do so, then may ye assure your selves of the fulfilling of that promise, *Be thou faithful, &c.*

Rev. 2. 10.

This for the first Observation.

Sir,

Sir, we would see Jesus.

From the first word (*Sir*) I gather, that they that are or desire to be Religious, will always be civil. This is clear from my Text, *Sir, &c.*

Though *Philip* before his calling to the Apostleship was but a poor Filtherman, yet when they saw that he could help them to a sight of Christ, they spake reverently, *Sir.* *Mary Mag-* Joh. 20. 15.
dalen when she saw Christ the supposed Gardiner, she gave him the same compellation, *Sir, if thou hast taken him away, tell me where thou hast laid him; Facit istud* (saith *Aretius* on the place) *ad benevolentiam, ut corpus ab eo facilius impetret*: That is, She doth this, to procure his good will, that she might with less trouble get his Body: *Appellabat Dominum cujus ancilla non erat* (saith *St. Austin*) *ut per eum perveniret ad Dominum cujus erat*: That is, She calls him *Sir*, or *Lord*, whose handmaid she was not, that by his means she might come to him whose she was. She meant otherways, saith he, when she saith, *They have taken away my Lord*, than when she said, *Sir, if thou hast born him hence*; and he subjoyns the reason, *Nam & Prophetæ appellarunt Dominos eos qui homines erant, sed aliter de quo scriptum est Dominus nomen ei.* Civility hath never been wanting in all Ages in the godly, even when they had to deal with Heathens; but how much more when

when with those that worshipped the true
 Gen. 23. 7. God? To Heathens: *And Abraham stood up,
 and bowed himself to the people of the Land, even
 Acts 26. 25 to the Children of Heth.* St. Paul, though Festus
 was his Enemy, giveth him the title of most
 Noble. And as for the courtesie and civility
 of the Children of God, to those that profess
 the same Faith, it is most clear: *David bowed
 1 Sam. 20. himself to Jonathan, Mephibosheth to David.* In
 41.
 2 Sam. 9. 8. sum; for I need not instance, all God's peo-
 ple, as occasion served, were always courteous.
 And that

First, Because it is enjoined as a vertue: *Be
 1 Pet. 3. 8. pitiful, be courteous,*

Secondly, Because in this they resemble their
 Master, that was meek and lowly, and gave
 every man his due.

Thirdly, Because that Christian policy re-
 quires it, being commanded to be wise as Ser-
 pents, and innocent as Doves, that they may
 gain others; becoming, with St. Paul, all things
 to all men.

Fourthly, Because it mitigates the rudeness
 of those that are not of the same profession,
 and conduces more to the gaining of their de-
 sires, as you see in my Text, and the Scripture
 afore-cited.

Is civility then or courtesie always joyned
 with true godliness, and a duty commanded?
 Then what may we say of those that make no
 distinction, but in a rude and rustick manner
 rush

rush into all places, and unto all persons alike? Surely this, that their profession is like themselves, both vain and foolish.

Secondly, Let us try by this whether we have a desire to see or serve Jesus, or no; for if we be courteous to those that can help us to a sight of him, it is a sign we think to obtain what we desire.

We would see Jesus. Hence observe,

Those that know Christ in any measure, will earnestly desire to see him more fully.

These Greeks had heard great things that had been prophesied of him, and seen such done by him, and therefore they would see him. The very Name of Christ hath this attractive power. What was it that *David* panted after, as the Hart after the water-brooks? Surely a *Psal. 42. 1.* sight and fruition of Jesus, as ye may see in the next Verse, *My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before him?* What beauty was that he so much long- *Psal. 27. 4.* ed to see, but the delight and soul-ravishing complacency he had in seeing of Christ? Were there no other instance, *St Paul's Cupio dissolvi* were enough: He had seen him in lightning, and afterward in his blessed and efficacious actings on his Soul; yet this will not satisfy, he desires to be with him; the World which is the Devil's Pimp, and the Soul's Bane, cannot allure

- Phil. 3. 8. allure him, but he will count all things loss and dung for one sight of him. What made
- Joh. 8. 56. *Abraham* rejoyce to see his day, but the thoughts of those Promises he knew would be fulfilled? Hence saith *Calvin* upon the place, *Cum adhuc tam obscura esset Christi cognitio, tanto ejus desiderio accensus fuit Abraham, ut ejus fruitionem bonis omnibus praeferet*: That is, When as yet there was so obscure a knowledge of him, *Abraham* was inflamed with such a desire, that he preferred the enjoyment of him to all things whatsoever. What made the Woman of *Samarita* to go back her self, and call her Neighbours to see, but that before she had found some extraordinary thing in him? Is not this the Christ? Was it not the same reason that made the Children of God in all Ages, suffer their afflictions patiently, submitting to the strokes of their Murderers. *Moses* chose rather to endure affliction with the people of God, than the pleasures of sin for a season; and esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches, than the treasures in *Egypt*, for he had respect to the recompence of reward; and what was that, but a saving sight of his and our Saviour *Jesus*?
- Acts 7. 55. *Stephen* endured death patiently, because he saw *Jesus* standing on the right hand of God, and expected shortly after, not only to see, but enjoy him there. And this made all the Martyrs so unanimously lay down their lives.

I might run on in this strain till I were breathless, particulars of this nature being almost

most infinite ; but because I will not detain you from a sight of him, I shall make Application.

Do they that know Christ in some measure, desire to see him more fully ? Then let me exhort you, as you love your own Souls, (since your Christiana profession makes me apt to believe that you have seen him) that you will seek for a more full view of him.

But it is like you will say, How can we see Object. Jesus ? He is in Heaven, and we on Earth ; his body is glorified ; our eyes are dim, and at best we can but see through a glass.

It is true ; but that glass is so bright, that *Answer.* beholding him rightly there, you shall at last see him face to face.

Look upon him then in the glass of his Types that prefigured him ; as *Abel, Isaac, the burning Bush, Aaron's Rod, the brazen Serpent,* and many others recorded in Scripture. Look on him in his Names ; *Wonderful Counsellor, Prince of Peace, Shiloh, the rod and stem of Jesse, Emmanuel, Jesus,* and many others. In his Works, not only of Creation and Providence, as he is God, but Redemption, as he is Θεάνθρωπος. In the glass of his Offices, as he is *King, Priest, and Prophet* : King, to rule by his Word and spirit in this World, and his glorious Presence

in that to come : As a Priest, in that he offered up himself a propitiatory Sacrifice, and now abides for ever to make intercession for us : As a Prophet, revealing himself, and the Salvation wrought for us in his blessed Word. Having, I say, thus seen him, and making good use of all these, we may say, not as the Gentiles, *Sir, we would see* ; but, *Sir, we have seen Jesus* : Which blessed sight in Glory we desire to see ; and for the expectation of which, we ascribe to the Object (as due is) eternal praise. *Amen.*

FINIS,